

*The true Scripture Doctrine,  
of the Mode and Subjects of Christian*

## **BAPTISM;**

With some Strictures on Dr. GILL's Sentiments  
of the Moral Law, and Justification from Eternity.

**IN SIX LETTERS**

**TO A**

**CANDID ANTIPÆDOBAPTIST.**

**BEING**

A full Answer to DR. GILL's Sermon, at Mr. Carmichael's dipping, and to all that he ever published on Baptism.

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By HENRY MAYO, M. A.

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*The Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, just and good.*

*My Yoke is easy, and my Burden light.*

*Baptism—not the putting away of the Filth of the Flesh.*

*Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: For I say unto you, that in Heaven, their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father.*

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**L O N D O N:**

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## Advertisement.

**T**HE writer of the following letters, hath no prejudice against any Antipædobaptist whatever; the candid among them he highly esteems; he is honored with the friendship of several; and hopes he ever shall: His controversy is neither with great or small, save Dr. Gill; and nothing but his supra bigotry could have forced him to appear in print. Though the Doctor declares "scarce any thing new that is serious and pertinent can be expected from him," yet he must preach, and print, and reprint on the subject, and continue to inflame Christians one against another; and as if all his own brethren were likewise ignorant of the Scriptures, and unlearned, he hath in the preface to his late sermon, declared his determination to write against every advocate for infant Baptism: Thus, he hath certainly constituted himself, the Champion for the kingdom of adult dipping; but how fit a person he is for that high office, the following letters will show. Their author acknowledges himself indebted to Messrs Towgood's and Fleming's excellent and unanswerable tracts on the subject: If he hath brought the controversy into a less compass, and reflected a little more light on any part of it, 'tis all the merit he claims. He hopes the letters will be of service, to promote obedience to the law of God; and charity, love and mutual forbearance, among those that differ in an external rite; and to establish them that are wavering through the  
cunning

## ADVERTISEMENT.

*cunning craftiness of a few Bigots, who would compass sea and land to make one proselyte to dipping, and glory more in him, than in ninety and nine proselytes to righteousness and holiness; who being partakers of Christ's Baptism in their infancy, need no more water Baptisms, much less Dr. Gill's.*

*If this is the fruit (to borrow the Doctor's words) I am content to bear the indignities of men, and shall reckon it an overbalance to all his reproaches and insults. Whatever hard names are found in the letters, are the Doctor's own; which might have been returned to him, with much greater propriety, than he bestowed them on*

CANDIDUS.

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ST. LOUIS, MO.

1899

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# SIX LETTERS

## TO A

### Candid ANTIPAEDOBAPTIST.

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#### LETTER I.

*Shews the occasion of the correspondence and publication.*

SIR,

**A**T a late interview, *Baptism* was the chief topic of conversation; the occasion you well know, a third person mentioned the name of Carmichael, and spoke of him as a minister of the Kirk of Scotland, converted to your denomination \*. Being persuaded from our frequent conversations upon the essentials of religion, we could freely converse about an external rite, without falling out, or thinking the worse of each other; Baptism employed our remaining time. Our conference ended, with a resolution to meet at the place where this remarkable convert was to be rebaptized (or baptized which you please.) As a person distinguished with the honourable appellation of D. D. was to officiate; you remember our expectations were very high, as to being entertained and profited. We met, but I know you was as greatly disappointed, surprized, and vexed as myself;

\* Dr. Gill also (for very obvious reasons) hath stiled him minister of the gospel in Edinburgh; but to whom did he minister? And, was his ministry valid before dipped or not? Know all men that it is unquestionably true, this reverend Profelyte was never a minister of the Kirk of Scotland, in Edinburgh, or any other place: He was only a private member of that church, and a very unstable one; for after a time he fell off to the Seceders; then he revolted from them to the pure Glaslites, and now being cast out by them, he hath joined himself to the charitable Antipaedobaptist Dr. Gill: With whom may he rest!

B

from

from his prayer, we concluded (*as did many besides*) we had come in vain, not being able to hear half he uttered ; I really thought, through age or infirmities his voice was impaired, that made him so low ; because, in so solemn an act of worship as *prayer*, when a minister is professedly the mouth of the people ; doubtless, if able, he ought to speak so as to be heard, else how can fellow worshippers join with him, how can they say *Amen* ? But, Sir, how soon after mentioning his text, did he convince us, he had a masculine strong voice ? In pronouncing *certain words*, you observed the fire burned within him, his eyes flamed, and the whole house was filled with his voice ; it sounded like a rushing wind, and (to use his own words) we were all as if immersed into and covered with it, *ergo*, I was then baptized if never before. You will forgive me this, because yourself was a little warm at the Doctor's sermon ; and indeed it was impossible, for any person of the utmost moderation and charity, but to be somewhat disgusted.

You were a witness, Sir, how he railed at those who differed from him : You remember, he represented the greater part of the Christian world \* as *unbaptized Heathens* ; and their ministers, as either *unlearned*, or *ignorant of the scriptures*, or both ; in brief, he made them either *fools*, or *deceivers* ; as you heard the sermon, you know this to be no misrepresentation of him, or his discourse ; rather the grossest misrepresentation of the sermon preached by Dr. Gill, is that which is now published with his name prefixed.

The head hangs by a string tumbled and tost,  
Some limbs torn off, are laid aside and lost,  
The body what is left of it rent and tore,  
Pieces stuck on that ne'er were his before,  
But o'er the mangl'd heap, the author stands  
Proclaims the work the glory of his hands.  
*Oh pity him, Christian friends !*

\* Doubtless there are two thousand Pædobaptists to one Antipædobaptist.

The printed sermon to be sure is *Catholic*, compared with what he delivered; the polite words, *absurd, absurdity, &c.* you see are not so frequently repeated in print; as also a gentle turn is given to several passages; he confesses indeed, that what he hath published is no nearer what he preached, than *his memory* could assist him; and it pleases me, his memory is not quite so *uncharitable* as his lips.

Knowing the Doctor's great fondness to appear in print, hardly an occasional sermon he preaches, but what is "*published at, or by request*;" I thought to give him a gentle admonition or two first in a public paper, that we might have as masterly a defence of adult dipping as possible: You see, Sir, what good effects it produced; *angry snarls* from some of his warm brethren, and a volley of *hard names* from himself, in the preface and notes to his elaborate work. If his works live to immortality, I shall live also; and if *Christians* will believe him, shall be considered as a *wise-acre, an ignorant, impertinent, illiberal, canting, cowardly, cavilling, calumniating, scoffing, scurrilous, vilifying scribbler, a lying worthless writer*. I hear you say, he has let himself low enough indeed; strange, Sir, my gentle touch should make him wince so; but do not smile at it, for I really fear what will be the consequences, both as to himself, and with respect to others. Hath he not lost the possession of himself? certainly he hath given the enemy too great an advantage over him, and over the common cause: If *Protestants* can thus treat their brethren, and give way to *malice, and envies, and evil speakings*, no wonder if the infallible *Church of Rome*, to fiery words add stakes, to convince us theirs is the right way, and the true church; and compel us to come in.

His *rude attack* upon me, you know, Sir, excited nothing but pity for him in my breast; and when I saw how my kind intentions were perverted, and beheld the *bitter fruits* in his writing and behavior, it almost repented me, I had strove with him. However, to bring him (if possible) to the proper exercise of his reason; to convince him he is fallible as well as other mortals; and to en-

gage him *in futuro*, to display more humility, justice and charity, I have complied with your and other friends desire, to offer my thoughts this way ; hoping with you, that a few candid strictures on the Doctor's sermon, will be serviceable to abate his and a few others *watry*, as well as *fiery zeal*, and make them speak and behave towards others, more like Christians : Your request of prefixing my name is also granted, which (as the Doctor knew by a letter) might have been dispensed with ; but as you hint, it will prevent his having any more recourse, to that stale observation of the Indians way of fighting. My next shall bring to remembrance the Doctor's *judicious explanation* of his text : In the mean time I am,

Yours, &c.

## LETTER II.

*Proves that the moral Law, and the Commandments of Christ, are not grievous.*

SIR,

THE Doctor's text you remember was 1 John v. 3. *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.* By the commands, he told us, "the Apostle did not mean the "Ten Commandments stiled the moral law; no, the moral precepts were grievous, a fiery law, the ministration of condemnation and death; and as they were "not easy of observation, so they were not binding on "Christ's disciples; therefore Baptism and the Lord's "Supper must be here understood by the commandments, which Christians were to keep, and which were "not grievous." I can safely appeal to you, whether these were not his expressions *verbatim*, (if a word or two be omitted or added, it is on the candid side) which gave us great concern; and you remember made me say, *his exposition of the text was doubtless ad rem*: You thought this was too gentle a rebuke; and wondered I had not been more faithful, and more severe upon him; for his *severe treatment* of the law of God; for representing *that* in so unfavourable a light, which recommends itself in every precept to all men; which is the voice of nature, and of reason, as well as of revelation: Indeed, Sir, I judge with you, that there is not a moral precept in the Bible, but reason at once approves of, and which every man's conscience tells him it is his indispensable duty to esteem and obey. What hath God required of man, but to *do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God*; are, these things to be *complained of*, and esteemed *hardships*, by creatures who are upheld every moment in life, by the unwearied goodness of their great law-giver; much less by those who were redeemed by the blood of his own Son? It would be no hard task, to prove the moral law, what the Apostle stiles it, *holy, just and good*\*; whatever

\* Romans vii. 12.

it requires us to do, or commands us to abstain from, as it is highly reasonable, so absolutely necessary for our well-being here, and our eternal happiness: Surely, its precepts tend to promote the welfare of body and mind, of individuals, families and states; yea to adorn, exalt, and perfect human nature: and shall we say then, that they are *grievous*? doth not that man who stiles them so, *traduce* the law of God, and God himself; doth not he hold him up to public view, as an *arbitrary tyrant*, as an *Egyptian task master*, as giving precepts that were not good in themselves, and also rigorous and cruel. How contrary this, to God's own proclamation of himself, *the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands* \*; could any thing proceed from him then, that was unrighteous, and unmerciful towards his creatures? I hear you reply, *the statutes of the Lord are right*, and all his *moral commandments*, are *pure and equitable*; suited to our natures, and calculated for our felicity; and instead of being called *a fiery law*, should be the rejoicing of our hearts: Your language is, that every one who knows what the *love of God* to sinners hath been, and still is, and is really possessed of *love to God*; will never say, his moral commandments are grievous. What though the flesh is weak, what if human nature be degenerate and fallen, what if the heart is deceitful, what if the affections be strongly biased to earthly things, what if there be many temptations from without, as well as hurtful lusts within; are not the *promises of God* in his word, the *gracious aids* of his spirit, and the *supplies of grace and strength* that are *in Christ*, more than sufficient to counterbalance? How many humble and sincere Christians have been able to say, *through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things* †. They have gone on with pleasure, from one command and duty to another; from one degree of strength and obedience to another; till, like the *author and finisher of their faith*, they have finished the work God gave them to do, and came off *more than conquerors*.

In brief, Sir, who that considers the *law-giver*, a God of infinite wisdom, goodness and compassion, can dare

\* Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

† Phil. iv. 13.

to say, *his statutes are grievous*; who that considers how holy, just and good they are, how reasonable, how well calculated, how *absolutely necessary* to our well being in time and for eternity; who that considers the powerful and divine aids he grants to them, that call upon him with a pure heart; who that looks upward, to the *everlasting hills*, and takes a view of the glorious rewards, riches and honours, he will bestow on the faithful and obedient servant, after his short work and warfare here is accomplished; who that attends to *these things*, can suffer a thought to arise within him, that the *moral precepts of God are grievous*?

You observed, Sir, that the Doctor's character of the moral law, was not only an *unjust*, and *injuriously one*, and by it he reflected on the great legislator and his perfections; but that he represented it, as having no *commanding power* over Christians. This is not to be wondered at; he that can think lightly, and speak severely of it, cannot want much temptation to set it aside, and argue against it in print; if we may judge from *Dr. Gill's writings*, and believe *False's trumpet*, some of the moral commandments are certainly grievous to him; as, *humility, charity, love the brotherhood, follow peace with all men, bless and curse not, mourning for sin, mortifying passion, &c.* These are distasteful, *ill-favoured commandments*, which many nominal Christians will not meddle with; “and  
“ why should we, say they? Christ hath obeyed the whole  
“ law and fulfilled all righteousness for us, he is our sanc-  
“ tification, and it is detracting from his merits, suffi-  
“ ciency and grace, to think of a frail man's personal  
“ obedience, and righteousness.”

But, Sir, did the gospel of Christ abolish, or set aside the moral law? Or did his obedience and death, lessen men's obligation to observe it, as the rule of heart and life? *No*: under the gospel, obedience is not the *condition* of obtaining eternal life, but it is *the way*, the true and *only safe way*, in which we must walk to inherit it; this is the language of scripture, *do we make void the law, through faith? God forbid, yea we (Apostles of Christ)*  
*establish*

*establish the law* \*. *Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord* †.

But hath Dr. Gill set aside, or made void the law? Not so much in his printed, as in his *extempore sermon*; you observe what *guards* he hath now placed on some of his expressions, and given others a *gentle touch* as with a crow quill. But still, how *exceptionable*, and *inconsistent*! Take a proof or two of his sound mind.

He says “ That the moral law delivered by Moses is “ to be observed by Christians ;” *but how?* “ to be kept “ from a principle of love to God †.” I grant this to be the noblest motive, the most constraining principle that can animate the Christian’s breast; but is it not, Sir, to be kept *from duty*, as well as *love*? Doubtless; tho’ I fear the Doctor (like too many others) thinks that Christ came into the World, to set men free from the obligation, or commanding influence of the law of God; *else* why had he not mention’d *duty*, as well as *love*; and why did he exalt *external rites*, and *positive institutions* above moral precepts, “ among the commandments of Christ “ (says he) Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are the chief “ and principal ¶;” and why did he entirely omit *moral precepts*, and mention only *Baptism* and the *Lord’s Supper*, as not grievous, when he was expressly exhorting his auditory, to observe the commandments of God and of Christ §. But are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the chief and principal commands? *Far from it*, they are rather *the least*; though conscientiously to be observed by Christians; yet are they greatly inferior to, and not to be compar’d with the *weighty things* of the moral law. Knows he not, that God requires the heart, and obedience to his moral law, rather than sacrifice, or the observance of any external rites whatever? You do, Sir, (if he doth not) and have often lamented, that so many mistake the nature and end of moral and ritual precepts; and that so many *antipædobaptists* in particular, lay such stress upon being dipped into the water; as to think that

\* Rom. iii. 31.

† Heb. xii. 14.

‡ Sermon, pag. 5.

¶ Ib. pag. 7.

§ Ib. pag. 29.

without it, men cannot be true Disciples of Christ, nor members of his visible church here, and entertain but little hopes of their entering the kingdom of glory.

If the Doctor will turn to *Matt. v. ver. 17, 18, 19.* and *see with his eyes, and understand with his heart*; he will clearly discover the vast importance of moral precepts and *men's obligation* to observe them. The Son of God came to set mankind free from the tyranny of Satan, from the bondage of corruption, from the guilt of sin, from Pagan superstitions, and from Jewish ceremonies; this is the freedom with which the Son of God invests his Disciples; *glorious freedom!* Happy they who by the Son are thus made free: But that he came *to abolish* the moral law, or to free his Disciples from obedience to any of its precepts; as 'twas indeed what his enemies laid to his charge, so was it without any foundation; which he prov'd from its stability and permanency; *heaven and earth shall pass away*, the frame of the universe shall be dissolved, *sooner than one jot*, the least part of *this divine law shall pass*, or lose its commanding power over the consciences and lives of men: That none of his Disciples might think, that his own perfect obedience did cancel, or render theirs less necessary; you see, Sir, he represents the moral precepts, as continuing in full force, *to be fulfill'd by them*, to the consummation of all things: Hence he added that *whosoever should break*, wilfully neglect, and habitually violate the divine commands, any, *yea but one*, and that the *very least of them*, and *teach others so to do*, either by preaching, conversation or example, *should be called*, considered and treated, *as the least*, the unworthiest and most contemptible of all *his Disciples*, or members of his visible church. What greater zeal for the law of God, could the Savior manifest, than is contained in those words; what sentence could he utter, of more force to oblige his followers to *prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God* \* concerning them, and to be found in universal obedience to it? Surely the Christian is not *to pick and chuse* among the commandments; but to pay a conscientious, and I was going to say, an *equal respect* to all, (for the least

\* Romans, xii. 2.

hath the same stamp of authority on it as the greatest; he is to esteem none of them, *little or inconsiderable*, much less *burdensome*, and *grievous*; and I will be bold to say, that the *preacher* who designedly leads men to think, they are released from their obedience and duty to the moral law; and who doth not from time to time, inculcate upon his hearers, the moral precepts of God and Christ, as well as preach Jesus and the resurrection, the virtues of his death and exaltation; is no *real friend* of Christ, nor of the souls of men; and no wonder his preaching is as vain, as *sounding brass*, and a *tinkling cymbal*.

But now, Sir, let us turn from the *exceptionable* part of the Doctor's exposition of his text, to the *inconsistent*. The very first sentence of his printed sermon is "What I shall say in the following discourse will much depend on the sense of the word Commandments, by which are meant not the ten commandments, or the commands of the moral law." Now, as the discourse was entirely on *water Baptism*, to be sure, that was the *proper sense* of the word, as well as the *chief command*; but by my help (which, instead of gratefully acknowledging, he abuses me for, styling it a sneer) he hath found, that the commands in his text, were not *simply*, nor *chiefly*, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; for he hath now added "rather the commandments of faith and love, the Apostle speaks of in the 3d chap. 23d ver. may be design'd \*." But why refer us so far back? Is it not said chap. iv. 21. *And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also*; and doth not the Apostle continue his discourse on those two great commands, even to the text? Now pray, Sir, what difference is there between the moral law, and love to God and our neighbor? I always took them to be one and the same thing; and so did the learned Doctor himself once, if it is lawful to quote against him his own words, or set *John* against *Gill*; "The moral law was given by Moses, the sum of which law is love to God, and love to our neighbor, as appears from that answer which Christ gave to the Lawyer, who put this question to him, saying, *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* Jesus said

“unto him, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* Hence it is that the Apostle Paul says, *that love is the fulfilling of the law* \*.” You see, *here* he says the sum of the moral law, is *love to God, and our neighbor*; and this love is the fulfilling of the law; and in his late discourse, he acknowledges, that the commandments of faith and love, are chiefly intended in the text, *which were commands of Christ, and were not grievous* †, and yet, Sir, the moral law is not meant. So that he hath written *these contradictions*, as with a *sun beam*; the moral law is *not meant* by the commands in his text, yet that which is the sum of it, is *chiefly design’d*: The moral law is *grievous, a fiery law, the letter that kills, the ministration of condemnation and death*; but love to God and love to our neighbor, on which hang all the law and the prophets, are not grievous; can you tell, Sir, why one should deserve such hard epithets, and not *the other*, which are just the self-same thing: Or how came it to pass that as the subject of his discourse so much depended on the *sense* of the word *Commandments*, which are now by him confessedly, *love to God and our neighbor*; *water Baptism* should be the alone burden of his song. *Highly proper and pertinent!*

You may wonder that a man should be so inconsistent with himself; not merely *in preaching*, but even *in print*, contradicting in one page, what he hath asserted in another; and still more wonder, that a minister should speak so lightly, if not detractingly of that great law, by which his preaching and his works, and by which we all shall be judged in the last day; but my admiration is not at all rais’d; I verily think him capable of much *greater absurdities*; not barely from the sermon we heard him preach, but from another pamphlet of his, now before me, *on the doctrine of justification*: Wherein he asserts; not only that the law hath no commanding and con-

\* Smith’s funeral sermon, pag. 9.

† pag. 7.

damning power over the believer in Christ, but “ That the  
 “ gospel is all promises, it hath no commands, nothing  
 “ in it looks like a law \* ; that the reason why we are  
 “ justified, is not because we have faith ; but the reason  
 “ why we have faith, is because we are justified † ;  
 “ that all the elect of God are justify’d and pardon’d  
 “ whilst they are ungodly ;” and that no person might  
 mistake him, he hath defin’d an *ungodly person* ; “ he is  
 “ one without the grace and fear of God, and without  
 “ Christ, being destitute of a true knowledge of him,  
 “ of faith in him and love to him, such a person being  
 “ thus ungodly, ’tis evident God justifies and pardons ‡.”  
 Nay, Sir, don’t be surpriz’d yet, for he goes much farther,  
 he asserts that these ungodly persons “ are and  
 “ must be acquitted, discharged and justified from etern-  
 “ nity, so as nothing could be laid to their charge || :”  
 In consequence of this, “ none of the elect’s sins are ac-  
 “ counted to them, but ’tis the will of God, plain and  
 “ manifest to punish sin not in them, but in his Son § ;”  
 and thus, *he asserts*, “ they were eternally discharged,  
 “ acquitted from sin, freed from punishment, and secured  
 “ from everlasting wrath and destruction” \*\*. So that,  
 Sir, you see, men are actually justify’d and pardon’d,  
 while alienated from the life of God, and enemies to him  
 by wicked works, and in a state of guilt and condem-  
 nation ; yea they are *actually pardon’d*, before they com-  
 mit any sin, and even before *they exist*. Is this the lan-  
 guage of a D. D. or even of a rational creature †† ? You  
 ask me where he found those nostrums ; why he says

\* pag. 13. Surely then Christians may live as they list, for  
 where there is no law there is no transgression ; but how contrary  
 this to Titus ii. 11, 12. and iii. 8. et passim. Nay how con-  
 trary to himself in his baptismal Sermon, where he speaks of  
*commands of Christ*.

† pag. 36.

‡ pag. 40, 41.

|| pag. 48, 49.

§ pag. 54, 55.

\*\* pag. 56.

†† Some, if not Dr. Gill, have a peculiar talent of mak-  
 ing authors and their opponents say what they never thought  
 of ; and affirm, what they flatly deny ; this I abhor, and there-  
 fore have taken the Doctor’s own words, which are too plain  
 and precise, to admit of any plausible, or even probable misre-  
 presentation.

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our *sound protestant divines* teach them ; but the great question is, *do reason, and revelation teach them?* reason pronounces them *absurd*, and surely, Scripture declares them *heretical* : Can we be the objects of wrath, and of love ; the children of God, and of the Devil, at one and the same time ; can we be justify'd and pardon'd, (for the Doctor says all who are justify'd are pardon'd\*) and yet at the same instant, be in a state of condemnation ; as the sacred oracles declare every unbeliever is † : If the *intention*, or eternal purpose of God to justify men, (which is the Doctor's foundation stone) actually justifies them ; they are as certainly, and actually, *called, sanctify'd, and glorify'd* from eternity ; so Christ was actually made a curse before he was *born*, and even from *eternity* ; and indeed the world and its inhabitants, were and must be created from eternity. How would an *American Savage* stare, and laugh to hear a Christian divine, and a Doctor too, preach such things ; and so confidently assert, *that an intention or purpose concerning a thing, makes that thing actually to exist?* but there are many of his poor brethren, you well know, are sadly convinced of the contrary ; they find *words*, be ye warmed, be ye filled, and even *promises* to help them, are not *actions* that profit them, *much less* his intentions.

I purposed to do an act of Christian kindness to the Doctor, in reproving him, according to the scripture exhortation ‡ ; but he was not *actually reprov'd*, till my letter was penn'd, and he read it : *Writing*, was the way in which he was actually reprov'd ; and so *faith*, is the way the word of God declares, in which sinners are actually justify'd. That they are not justify'd and pardon'd *before* faith, or *without* faith, and from eternity ; but *by and through* faith ||, which is the gift of God to them, in *this life*, there are *scriptures innumerable*, which demonstrate : It would be insulting your understanding to mention them ; and as they are so plain, that humble sincere Christians cannot misunderstand them, so none but the *unlearned and unstable*, do wrest and pervert them.

\* pag. 4.  
2 Tim. iv. 2.

† John iii. 18.  
|| Romans, iii. 30.

‡ Lev. xix. 17.

The conclusion of the whole matter is this ; you see the Doctor sadly mistook his text, and what is worse, took occasion from it, to make void the moral law of God ; representing it as *grievous*, giving it hard names, and exalting positive institutions above it : But what other could be expected *from one*, who in another publication, makes void even Faith itself ? For if men are actually justify'd, and pardon'd, and freed from punishment, *from eternity* ; what occasion, Sir, for faith and repentance, or prayer for forgiveness of sin ; yea what need of *Baptism itself*, or the Lord's Supper ; how needless was Christ's coming into the world ; what necessity for him to send forth Apostles to preach the gospel, that men's faith might come by hearing it ; and what occasion is there now, for him to send his Spirit with his word, to convince men of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and to help them through faith, and the use of means, to persevere unto salvation ? What need for men to fear sin, or to abstain from it ; if all future sins are actually forgiven, as well as the past ; if all are accounted to Christ, and punished in him, and *never will be in them*. Truly, Sir, this notion of *eternal justification*, may well be stiled *eternal nonsense* ; and as 'tis big with absurdities, so (*tantum equus Trojanus*) big with evils, to pure and undefiled religion, and to the morals and souls of men. The importance of the contents, will I hope excuse the length of this epistle ; wishing you every blessing I rest,

Yours, &c.

## LETTER III.

*Proves that dipping is a grievous command.*

S I R,

**Y**OUR approbation of my last letter, (saying, it fully prov'd, the Doctor sadly blundered in the explanation of his text, that he seem'd to be no great, nor real friend to the moral law, and was very inconsistent, in what little he said respecting the commandments;) excites me to lay before you another proof, that *his text* had no reference to his *preachment*, but is entirely subversive of it: Possibly you may differ from me in this, but I am persuaded my speaking with freedom, (*acting as a Protestant*) will not break the league of Christian friendship, subsisting, and which, *I hope*, will ever subsist between us.

The very next day after the Doctor's declamation, on *God's commands are not grievous*, you know one of your brethren, preached on a like occasion from these words, "*From the beginning it was not so* \*." Yourself wonder'd at the choice of such a text, to recommend *Christian Baptism*, and to prove, that 'tis only, *by dipping*; but as the choice of such texts, to me, proves your brethren's sad embarrassment; so, was I like minded with you, I should really suspect that the preachers were *Pædobaptists incog*, or *in heart*; for never could more suitable words be chosen or applied, to overthrow all that the Doctor, and a few others, so rigidly and uncharitably contend for. If *Christian Baptism* is to be perform'd after Dr. Gill's mode; 'twill be no hard task to prove, 'tis a command *more grievous* than *circumcision*, or any jewish rite whatever. More grievous, Sir, both to the *baptizers*, and the *baptized*, which is self evident; if 'tis necessary to go to the middle in water, and plunge the subject, however *tall*, and *corpulent*, quite under it, and the colder the weather, you know, Sir, the greater evidence of the person's love to God in submitting to it; surely 'tis *necessary*, not only that Christians and churches should be careful in the

\* Matt. xix. 8.

choice of their ministers; that they be *able bodied men*, (have brawny arms and Herculean strength) to dip in a masterly way *at once*\*, without hazarding the subjects lives; but there is a needs be that the Baptizers be of Iron constitutions, if the custom of dipping was general in cold climates: Which is a *qualification* for a scripture Bishop or Pastor, that Christ and his Apostles have intirely omitted; *perhaps through ignorance or inattention*. That dipping in cold countries, must needs be a *grievous command*, both to Ministers and people, if they are of weak and infirm constitutions, you acknowledge; as it *endangers health*, and even *Life*; and indeed 'tis greatly to be feared, from some, if not *many instances*; that the thread of human life hath been cut asunder much the sooner respecting several, thro' submitting to this *hazardous operation*. Let the subjects of Baptism be either men or women, as their being overwhelmed in water, must be very disagreeable to them in cold weather, *tho' cloathed*; so if the practice of some in the third Century prevailed, *dipping naked*; bear with me, Sir, if I add, how insufferably *indecent*, how impudently *immodest*; as well as *hazardous*, and *dangerous*? Besides, if the subjects be *women*, how grievous would this rite be to the Minister; not *merely* endangering his health, by so frequent descending into the water in all weathers, (if the practice was universal) not only would he be in danger, of breaking the *sixth Command*, by being accessory to, and even hastening the death of the Baptized; but of violating the *seventh* also; for I suppose the Doctor and others of his brethren, *tho' Ministers*; have much the same feelings, infirmities and passions, as others of Adam's fallen race†.

\* There are several living credible witnesses of a man's being dipped, who happening to have a weak, or unskilful operator, or too long a nose, part of it was not under the water, query, whether he was properly Baptized? especially as several for part of their faces, or arms, or garments, have been obliged to submit to a second dipping.

† Moschus narrat de Conone presbytero, qui obtentionem quam patiebatur non poterat puellam nudam sancto oleo inungere: Anointing the Baptized with oil as an emblem of the Holy Ghost, being the custom among the easterns in the 3d and 4th Centuries.

When

When I reflect upon these things, Sir, I am not only convinced, that Baptism *by dipping*, is a grievous command, and therefore not one of the commandments, mentioned or imply'd in the Doctor's text; but that this way of baptizing, *from the beginning was not so*; never the practice of John Baptist, *much less* of Christ and his Apostles; and never their intention, this external rite should be so administered; as they would certainly have mentioned some qualification *of body*, as well as *of mind*, necessary for christian Ministers; and would not the great head of the Church, think you, have taken care, that his members should never *so universally*, and for *so many centuries*, have departed from the mode of dipping, had it been the only true way? *doubtless*; suffer me to ask you, is it not unreasonable to suppose, that the Savior, who excused his Disciples from the strict observance of the Jewish Sabbath, out of *compassion* to their bodies;\* and who assur'd them, when he wash'd their feet, they were *as clean*, as if their whole body was washed†; would appoint a rite or ordinance, that should not only be *indecent* to spectators, and afford *raillery* to gainsayers; but be *grievous*, or attended with *great danger* as to the *health*, and even *life* of his ministers and people? surely as he said, *the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath*, so certainly, *Baptism was made for men, and not men for Baptism*.

Nay, Sir, you will excuse my saying that tho' *dipping* evidently appeared to be the scripture practice, (which I can by no means grant, being contrary to my real belief, and which my next Letter shall prove to be contrary likewise to the scripture testimony) yet, as that practice is in cold countries, and from different dresses and customs of people, and of *our nation* in particular, attended with great hazard and several bad effects; I cannot but believe, that he (the compassionate Jesus) who on a similar occasion, quoted and well knew the meaning of the words, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice* ‡, and mar-

\* Matt. xii. 3.

† John xiii. 10.

‡ Matt. xii. 7.

nifested his mercy, in various instances, not only to the souls, but *bodies of men, women and children*; would readily dispense with such a practice; and with pleasure accept the person, as *truly baptis'd*, and a real member of his Church, who had a small quantity of water poured upon him, as well as he, who was *overwhelmed* in it\*.

This, Sir, I was going to say, even yourself must allow when you consider; how *all your brethren*, as well as other denominations of christians, have deviated from our Lord's own form, and way of administering, and partaking of the other external rite, the Lord's supper: Who uses *unleavened bread*; or thinks that *one loaf* is essential to the ordinance? who adheres strictly to the *time*, and *form* of the first supper's being administer'd; or makes conscience of *leaning* on one another, or *reclining on couches*, when they receive the elements? Alas, Sir, why should the *mode* of one ordinance be so zealously contended for, more than the other; or why should a larger or less quantity of water, be thought *more essential* to baptism, than that of bread and wine is in the supper? Which last is certainly as *solemn*, as *divine*, and as *useful* an ordinance as Baptism, and with which therefore, *greater liberties* ought not to be taken, than with the other.

Whether I have demonstrated, that no such great stress ought to be laid *on dipping*, as the Doctor doth; granting 'twas the scripture practice; or whether I have convinced you, that the ordinance of Baptism, *by dipping*, in this and other countries, is *grievous*; much more *disagreeable, painful, and dangerous*, than even *circumcision*, must rest with you: But that no more professing christians, may be under a temptation to obey a *grievous command*, (not of Christ's but) of *Dr. Gill's*, and his bigotted ancestors of *two centuries past*, or comply, with what

\* Under the Mosaic dispensation, which laid such great stress upon rites and ceremonies, we find they were frequently and lawfully dispensed with †; and even *circumcision*, though enjoined to be performed on the eighth day, under an awful penalty, was omitted for 40 years. Joshua v. 5.

† Matt. xii. ver. 1 to 8.

may

may be too justly filed *will worship*; you will excuse my publishing a copy of this to the world.

In my next, by your indulgence, I'll take notice of what the learned Doctor hath advanced on the mode of Baptism: Tho' after proving it, in *his way* grievous; and from scripture, lawfully to be dispensed with, (supposing dipping was the practice in warm climates) it may seem unnecessary: however, as he hath in his Sermon, treated all that differ from him, as *fools, unlearned, ignorant of the scriptures, and unclean*; I shall lay before you the strong proofs there are from scripture, that persons are as *lawfully and properly baptised*, by having water *sprinkled*, or *pour'd* upon them, when *Infants*; as when *dipped* at *adult years*. Hoping to be still numbered among your most sincere friends,

I am,

Your's, &c.

## LETTER IV.

*Proves that christian Baptism, is lawfully administered by sprinkling.*

SIR,

**I**N my last, I freely offered you my thoughts on dipping; and could not but conclude from several particulars 'twas a *grievous command*; and therefore never could proceed from Christ, the great and compassionate head of the Church; nor should be conformed to, by any of his members: But as I promised to send you some of the chief arguments, for adhering to a mode of Baptism, different from that which you approve; and as I have been call'd upon, by your warm brother Dr. Gill, to give a reason of my belief in this particular; the following is submitted to your candid and serious perusal.

The scriptural mode of Baptism, is *only by dipping*, says the Doctor; but as I have prov'd him *besides himself* with respect to his text, I flatter myself, I shall prove him *mistaken*, in this point also. We will charitably suppose he was a little *nōncompos* (from that feverish flow of spirits he had) *when he delivered his Sermon*; for *since then*, as appears by his printed discourse, he hath found out *another sense* of the word βαπτίζω: Now he says, it not only signifies to dip or plunge, but also *to wash*; this, Sir is certainly a great concession from *so learned a man*; and an impartial person would think, christians must differ no longer about the mode of Baptism; because *to wash*, in numerous places of scripture, implies no more, than a partial application of water to persons and things, by *sprinkling* and *pouring*; and very seldom, a total immersion: But his very next words mar all again, and he himself proves, that what I said of him, was not a false representation, but a *very true one*; “all the Greek lexicons I ever saw, say the word, in a “secondary and consequential sense, signifies indeed  
“abluo,

“ abluo, lavo to wash; but this is, because what is  
 “ dipp’d is wash’d\*.”

So all the learned world still adhere to dipping, being the *only sense* of the word; for they would not have said it signified *to wash*, if what was dipp’d, was not wash’d: But doth the *sagacious Doctor* (who here answers for other men’s thoughts) think they would have said, that whatever is wash’d, *is*, and *must be* consequentially dipp’d? if he doth, there are *few learned*, if any besides himself, that do: The several lexicons he hath mentioned in his note, I have seen, and others beside; and they all say βαπτίζω signifies, *to wash*, as well as to dip; and the reasons why they so rendered the word, are best known, I should imagine, by the instances, or sentences they insert, where dipping in many of them is *entirely excluded*. You observe, he calls upon me to name a writer of any note, otherwise minded than himself; I could name him *all* he hath mentioned as for himself; but not to shoot above him, surely he hath seen *Leigh’s Critica sacra*, (which if of no note, the Doctor would not himself have made such use of) doth not that *Critic* say “ βαπτίζω sumitur pro quocunque genere ablu-  
 “ tionis, prolutionis, seu mundationis, etiam illius cui nul-  
 “ la immersionis species adest†.” What can be plainer, Sir, from this critic, as well as from *every lexicon* you consult; than that the word includes all kinds of wash-  
 ing, and those, where there is not the least appearance of *dipping*; doth not Leigh likewise expressly declare, the word *insert aspergere*, tho’ the Doctor hath said, none he ever saw, rendered the word *perfundo*, or *aspergo*, to *pour* or *sprinkle*: Now as the Doctor hath led his people into so gross a mistake, as to think all the *learned world* are on his and their side; he ought *in justice* to undeceive them; and honestly from the *pulpit*, as well as the *press*, to tell them, that the *Lexicographers* and *critics* he hath mentioned from time to time, (as well as

\* Sermon, p. 22. the note.  
 p. 54. Amstel. Edit. 1696.

† Leigh critica sacra,

*Dr. Casaubon and Grotius, whom thro' distress he hath pressed into his service in his notes,) were all not only Paedobaptists, but were sprinkled also; and would never be dipp'd afterwards, knowing from the general and strict sense of the word βαπτίζω, they were properly baptiz'd before\*.*

But as the *learned* in their works, *universally* inform us, there are *Baptisms* or washings, without dipping; let us next see what is the *scripture testimony*, of which you know the Doctor sometimes affects to be very fond. The Apostle, Heb. ix. 10. says, that under the Jewish dispensation, there were *divers washings*, (διαφοροῖς βαπτισμοῖς,) *different kinds*, or sorts of Baptisms; what they were, he mentions, as v. 13. *the blood of Bulls and Goats, was sprinkled on the unclean person for the purifying of his flesh*; in the 19 ver. he says, *Moses sprinkled the people and the book of the law, with blood and water*; and in the 21st v. adds, *that the tabernacle and all its vessels were sprinkled Likewise with blood*; and by these Baptisms or *sprinklings*, all things under the law were purified: So when a Leper was to be cleansed, or his infectious house to be purified; the Priest was to *sprinkle* them, with blood and running water seven times†; and even the Levites, when they were separated for the immediate service of God, were cleansed, devoted and set apart, not by dipping the whole body into water, but by *sprinkling* water upon them‡. Now those *sprinklings*, the Apostle expressly calls *Baptisms*; so that here are Baptisms, Sir, with *sprinkling*, exclusive of dipping.

Again; as the Doctor confesses his *Lexicons* inform

\* Dr. Owen, famous for his great knowledge of the Greek language, tho' perhaps Dr. Gill may call him an unlearned and ignorant man, thus speaks; "No one instance can be given in the scripture where βαπτίζω necessarily signifies either to dip or to plunge" — "I must say and will make it good that no honest man who understands the Greek tongue, can deny the word to signify to wash as well as to dip." Serm. &c. p. 581.

† Lev. xiv. 7, 51.

‡ Numb. viii. 7.

him,

him, that βαπτίζω signifies *lavo to wash*\*; I will give him an instance of the use of this last word in the *Septuagint*. Dan. iv. 23, and 25. where the tree and Nebuchadnezzar are both said to be wet, *strictly*, 'tis *washed*, or *baptised*, with the dew of Heaven; and if this will not satisfy him, let him read on to the 33 ver. and there he will find even the primitive of βαπτίζω, † used in the same sense; and his body *εβαπην* *was baptised with the dew of Heaven*; an expression which will puzzle *Dr. Gill's sagacity*, to account for any other way, than by the clouds *sprinkling* or *pouring* drops of rain upon him; tho' doubtless 'tis as proper (and not more ridiculous) to say, he was dipped *with* or *in* the dew of heaven; as to assert, like the Doctor, that men were dipped *in* or *with* a Cloud, in and with the Holy Ghost and fire‡.

We will now come to the New Testament, Sir, where one or two instances out of many must suffice. You remember I asked him, whether the Jews plung'd their whole bodies in water, every time before they did eat; and whether they dipped their Pots, brazen Vessels and Beds. These questions were not improper, as βαπτίζω is used in both instances; and were such plain proofs for Baptism, by a *partial application* of water, that one would have thought all, but a notorious caviller, must have been *speechless*; but he hath found some *cabalistical legends*, which say, "that the Pharisees and more superstitious part of the Jews every day before they sat down to meat, dip'd the whole body; and thus also they served their vessels, tables, and even beds, bolsters and pillows, dipping them, part by part ||." The

\* The stiff Dr. Gale, Sermon. V. Vol. II. p. 311. confesses this word is used for Baptism, and thus explains 1 Cor. vi. 11. *απελουσασθε* *ye are washed*, ye are in Baptism washed from all your sins. I leave Dr. Gill to vindicate the sentiment.

† Βαπτω. ‡ Sermon, p. 26, 28.

|| Sermon. Note, p. 22, 23. If the Doctor would publish a dissertation on the Jewish beds, their shape, length, breadth, thickness and weight, of what stuff made, and with what filled, feathers or what else that would bear dipping part by part, so often and without damage, &c. &c. he would certainly greatly oblige the public, and the learned in particular.

next

next time you see him, Sir, ask him, whether they did not also dip their garments and meal, wine, oil, milk, salt, and every other thing they brought from market? But to be sure they did, for the same reason for which they dipped their whole bodies; if their *bodies* were unclean, so were their *garments*, and so *every thing* that they touched.

But when he observes (after Scaliger, and we shall soon meet with some more on whom he pins his faith, not daring one would think to read the Scriptures, and think for himself) “that because the superstitious part of the Jews, always dipped the whole body before they sat down to meat, hence arose the Pharisees admiration at Christ, Luke xi. 38.” Surely, the most *credulous Papist* cannot believe him. Scripture says, *the Pharisee marvelled, that ου πρῶτον ἐβαπτισθη he was not first baptized*; what by plunging the whole body into water? Yes, says the Doctor, for otherwise he could not *properly be baptized*: But should not one text illustrate another? We are told, Mark vii. 4. *that the Pharisees when they came from market, εαν μὴ βαπτισῶνται unless they were baptized, did not eat*; but the third verse informs us, ’twas their *hands* only, that they baptized, or washed before they did eat; and this led them to marvel, and find fault with Christ, because he and his Disciples ate with unwashed hands, ver. 5. Nothing, Sir, can be *more demonstrable*, than that the Pharisees admiration, was not because he did not dip his whole body every time before he ate; but that he sat down to meat without first *baptizing*, or washing his hands\*. But even granting the Doctor, that the *superstitious part* of the Jews, did plunge themselves all over, every time before they did eat; (which is highly improbable) what Scripture warrant had they for so doing, or even for washing their hands? Did not our Lord immediately reprove them, in that they neglected the Commandments of God, and held the traditions of men? *Sprinkling* the water of separation on unclean persons and things,

\* The manner of washing their hands, according to Scripture, was not by dipping them, but by pouring water upon them, as Elisha pour’d water on the hands of Elijah. 2 Kings, iii. 11.

was all that God required, and would not that, Sir, have been sufficient? The Doctor knows, that the *most solemn purifications* under the law, were always by *sprinkling*; and there is not an instance in all the Bible, of a Priest's, or any other person's plunging another *into*, or *under the water*, for his separation or cleansing. But I will not enlarge here; let the *Christian Pharisees*, imitate their *brethren* among the Jews, and use water *as often*, and in as *large quantities* as they please; but let them not trouble the Church of Christ, and despise their Christian brethren, who are not quite so superstitious; who think with their Lord, John xiii. 10. that water applied but to one part of the body, *the feet*, or *the face*, is of as much service, as though it were to the whole body: 'Tis certainly, Sir, not the quantity of water, any more than of the bread and wine, that makes the ordinances of Christ a whit more *valid*, or *effectual*.

Another Scripture proof that Baptism is properly administered by *sprinkling*, is Matt. iii. 11. John told his auditors *that one was coming, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire*; what can be plainer, than that βαπτίζω signifies here to sprinkle, exclusive of all other senses? But according to Dr. Gill, the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, (which is uniformly spoken of in Scripture, by being *poured out upon*, and by an *unction*, or *anointing*, and by *resting* on the Apostles, in the form of cloven fiery tongues) proves notwithstanding, that Baptism is by *immersion*, or *overwhelming as in a pool*; he hath produced one Doctor to back him in this ridiculous explanation\*; but if one man is a little whimsical, shall I adopt his conceits and pay an *implicit faith* to his fanciful notions? Advise the Doctor, Sir, to see with his own eyes and judge for himself, and be the *consistent Protestant*. To do the Doctor justice however, *in print* he doth not say, the Baptism of the Apostles with the Spirit was actual immersion; no, “A rushing  
“ mighty wind filled all the house where they were sitting  
“ so that they were *as if* immersed into and covered with  
“ it, and therefore very properly called a Baptism.” Now, Sir, when he wrote his sermon and animadversions,

\* Sermon, pag. 27.

very probably, the room where he sat was *full of smoke*; and so he was *as if* immersed into and covered with it; and surely this may *as properly* be stiled a Baptism, as that of wind. But the Doctor certainly followed Dr. *Casaubon*, rather than the Scripture; for there is not a word in the Bible of wind's filling the room; but 'twas a *sound* or noise from heaven like as of a rushing mighty wind, that filled the house; *and so they were as if immersed into, and covered with sound: As if immersed*, that is as if baptized; a very pretty way, Sir, of *evading* and coming off; and the same ingenuity and art, he uses in his reasoning and remarks, on the Israelites being baptized in the cloud, and in the sea. When preaching, you remember he said, "The sea stood upon each side of them, and the cloud above covered them, and so they were all baptized by immersion." *Annotator divine!* Now he says, "the waters standing up as a wall on each side of them through which, and the cloud over their heads under which, they passed; they were *like persons* immersed in water \*." Truly, not quite *so wet*, no *likeness* at all, as to the effects, on either cloaths or persons; he quotes *Grotius* as on his side, respecting this text, and I could quote him, Sir, *on my side*, both as to the subjects and mode of Baptism, if that was requisite; but who should we believe? The *Apostle*, or rather the *Holy Ghost*, who says, The Apostles were *actually baptized* with the Spirit; and that the Israelites were *actually baptized* unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea; or Dr. *Gill* and other *fallible men*; who to answer a turn, would make them nothing but *allusions* to Baptism, and say, those expressions mean no other, than they were, *as if baptized, for there was some likeness in it, they were like persons immersed in water* †: Though the learned Doctor says, "This may with great propriety be called a Baptism, that is by immersion;" I cannot believe, he would receive a person into his church, that was thus baptized, either after the manner of the Apostles, or the Israelites; or that were only *like persons* immersed in water; he certainly was encompassed with a cloud, when he thought of producing this last instance, for Baptism *by immersion*; or he must mistake, and mean the Egyptians for the Israelites, as the

\* pag. 26.

† Sermon and note, pag. 26.

persons

persons *properly baptized* or covered with the sea: The Israelites were baptized by immersion *in* the cloud, and the *cloud far above them*; baptized *in* the sea, and *no water approached them*; baptized with what then? Why, *with nothing*: Which (to use the Doctor's own words) is as *monstrously ridiculous*, as to say we are baptized by circumcision; which he would insinuate I have done; but as I proved to you, he over-acted the *Grammarians* in the Greek, 'tis no wonder, he doth in his *mother tongue*.

The explanation I gave of the text, that they were baptized *in the cloud*, by its distilling drops of rain upon them; and *in the sea*, by the spray of the waves agitated by the strong wind that blew, as they were passing through the channel of the sea; you know he says, "is a mere conceit, a wild imagination, and contrary to the sacred scriptures; and if there was a continual spray, how could they pass through the sea on dry ground \*?" *How indeed!* Inform him, Sir, they passed not through the sea at all, the sea retired on each side of them, and the *scripture asserts*, that a strong east wind blew; and if that was the case, there must be *another miracle*, to prevent the spray of the waves: But let us *condescend to men of low degree*; suppose the Doctor was to walk through London streets in a shower of rain, still might he not be said to walk on dry ground? to be sure, or *as if* on dry ground. Granting what I said was a whimsical notion, yet surely it is not quite so absurd, as to say they were baptized or immersed *with a cloud*, and *with nothing*; or make them out to be only *as if*, or *like* persons baptized; and to represent the Apostles as baptized *with wind*, and *with sound*.

But what shall I say to, or of him, Sir, when he declares he never yet met with any *learned man* that ever asserted it †: Hath he never read any thing but *Jewish fables*, or doth he think others so unprofitably have spent their time? Or who pray doth he esteem learned? I could name him *twenty*, more learned than himself, who assert that the Israelites were baptized in the cloud, by

\* Sermon, page 26. Note.

† Ibid.

its *sprinkling water* upon them; and I could name several, that far exceed the *famous Dr. Gill*, in *all branches* of learning, who spake of their being baptized in the sea, by the spray of its waves; but out of the mouth of two or three let it be confirmed. Not to mention learned foreigners, as *Wolfius*, &c. You know, Sir, that *Dr. Goodwin*\*, *Mr. Locke*†, *Dr. Watts*‡, and *Dr. Guyse*|| believed they were thus baptized, and therefore said and published it. Who, think you, is ignorant of the controversy, or rather who is the very illiberal man? (for *Dr. Gill* must know the sentiments of the *great Dr. Goodwin*, as he in many places styles him, if he did not of the others §.) I pretend not to be a prophet; but as *Dr. Gill* will not have the vanity to compare himself with the *gentlemen* I have mentioned; so *their memories* will be precious, when his is forgotten; and *their writings* will live, and be extensively useful, when his are covered with

\* “ The sacraments extraordinarily and peculiarly administered to the Israelites, were types of ours; they came near the life, the sprinkling or mizling of the rain in the cloud and going through the Red sea, was even to the vulgar view a visible baptizing.” Vol. 5. Part 2. page 149.

† “ The Apostle calls it Baptism, which is the initiating ceremony into both the Jewish and Christian church; and that the children of Israel were washed with rain from the cloud, may be collected from Psalm lxviii. 9.” *Locke’s Works*, V. 3. p. 180.

‡ “ The children of Israel were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and the sea in their passage through the Red sea; not that they were dipped in the water, but they were sprinkled by the clouds over their heads, and perhaps by the water which stood up in heaps as they passed by.” *Watts’s Works*, V. 1. p. 821.

|| “ If it be supposed that here is any allusion to the mode of Baptism, it refers rather to sprinkling than immersion, since the Egyptians that were drowned in the sea, were baptized by the waters covering them, rather than the Israelites, that went on dry land, and could be no other way washed than with drops that might fall from the cloud, and the dashings of the waves.” *Guyse’s Paraphrase in locum*. Note.

§ “ No less a person than the great *Dr. Goodwin*, whose works I much value and esteem.” *Gill’s Doctrine of Justification*, p. 18.

dust

dust and cobwebs in a corner of a shelf, or meet with a treatment too indelicate for me to mention. His contemptuous usage of *such characters*, extorted this from me; but I hasten, Sir, to his proofs,

That Baptism must be *by immersion*; if not from the proper signification of the word βαπτίζω, yet from the places where the rite was performed; first, *in Jordan*; but he hath not disproved, that it may full as properly be said, *at* or *with* the river Jordan: a mere novice in the Greek language, knows that εν signifies *with* or *at*, as well as *in*; and accordingly it is rendered *at*, in above an hundred places of the New Testament, and as often, *with*: Why should it not be said then, that John baptized *with* the water of the river Jordan, or that he baptized *at* Jordan, as well as *in* Jordan? No, says Dr. Gill, not in that place; but in another, where εν is rendered *with*, he says it should be read *in*\*; so, *with*, may and should be altered for *in*, but not *in* for *with*; but whatever he may say, to baptize *in the Holy Ghost*, and *in fire*, are uncouth and very unusual phrases; and nothing but a great strait, could have forced him to give the words such a turn.

Well, but “ John baptized also at Enon, which he chose for this reason, because there was much water there; now if Baptism was not by immersion, what need was there to make choice of rivers and places abounding with water to baptize in † ?” You know, Sir, the Greek is ὕδατα πολλά *many waters*, or different collections of water; and there were several reasons, might lead him to chuse such a place besides immersion: The numbers that went to see and hear him, and the heat of the climate, called for a great supply of water, for drink, refreshment, and other necessary uses; and that the people might have a plenty of water near at hand, for these purposes, he might chuse the places he did, without the least respect to dipping.

Ah, “ but Philip and the Eunuch went down both into the water and came up out of it; and they must

\* Ib. page 23.

† Sermon, page 28. Note.

“go *into* the water (that is be immersed in it) because it  
 “is expressly said before, they were come *to it*, where-  
 “fore they went not unto it, if they were there before,  
 “but *into* it\*.” I can hardly forbear, Sir, adopting  
 another of his polite words, *Wiseacre!* Suppose, he was  
 riding in a chariot, and came to the water side, if then  
 he condescended to step out of it, to wash his face,  
 hands, &c. may it not be strictly said, that though he  
 was come to the water before, yet in coming down from  
 the chariot, he went down unto the water; which so  
 far from implying his being plunged into it, doth not  
 lead us to think his shoe was so much as wetted; be-  
 sides, if going into the water, implies immersion, Philip  
 must be dipped as well as the Eunuch; for it is said, *they*  
*went down both into the water*; and if the Eunuch really  
 went into the water, before plunged in, he *half baptized*  
*himself*; as indeed do all the Doctor’s Profelytes, if being  
 covered with water is Baptism.

Because he harped so much on *into*, and *out of*; you  
 remember I asked him, “how many times he must be  
 “told, that the Greek particles, or prepositions *εἰς* and  
 “*ἐκ* signify *unto* and *from*; and are thus rendered in  
 “hundreds of places in the New Testament;” and ap-  
 pealed to him, whether, “They went down *unto* the water,  
 “and came up *from* it; was not as proper, if not a more  
 “eligible and just reading than the other:” but if he  
 would insist on *into* the water, I asked him, “what he  
 “would make of Christ’s going *into* a mountain?” Really,  
 Sir, by his answer, he hath proved himself the *wisest*  
*man* among you, blessed with the farthest, if not with  
 the gift of *second sight*: Surely, he hath found a *cave* in  
 the mountain, so that our Lord in entering it, may pro-  
 perly be said to go into the mountain †: That is, he was  
*as if*, or *actually* immersed, or overwhelmed, or baptized  
*in* and *with earth*. This is certainly the tip-top of all;  
 pity he had not shewn his remarks to you or some other  
 judicious friend, before he published them to the world  
 with this *wonderful, highly probable cave*. To what shifts

\* Sermon, Note, page 24.

† Sermon, page 25. Note.

are the votaries of bigotry often reduced ! But how did he know, Sir, I meant the mountain, Luke vi. 12. rather than that Matt. v. 1. Is it not *εις το ορος into a mountain*, in one place, as well as the other ? But this *last text* would have proved even to his people and admirers, there was no cave there, or that Jesus did not go into one ; for then how could the multitude hear him ? I hear you say, he certainly went up *into*, or *ascended* this mountain, not to pray alone, but to preach to a multitude.——You observe the Doctor is a little shaken about the proper meaning of *εις* ; and now like a scholar, modestly says, “ it “ must be allowed, the preposition sometimes at least “ signifies *into* \*.” Yes, *often* ; and the Doctor shall be constrained soon, to acknowledge it *very often* signifies *unto*, and *to*, and not *into*. Give him from me the following example or two : But first, refer him to himself, Romans iv. 3. 5. 9. we meet with *εις δικαιοσυνην*, which he strenuously maintains, is, *UNTO righteousness*, and so again Rom. x. 10†. Beg him to consider also 1 Thess. iii. 12. where *εις* occurs three times, and must be rendered *unto*, or *towards*, which you please : So Matt. xv. 24. Our Lord says he was sent *εις τα προβατα*, &c. Should that be *to* or *into the lost sheep* ? *To*, you reply, doubtless ; unless the lost sheep had a *cave in them*, as well as the mountain ; though the Doctor’s criticism will suit very well with the tenet of some, and furnish them with an *invincible argument* for transubstantiation and Christ’s entering personally into them ; their stomach is the cave into which he goes, by virtue of *hoc est corpus, vel hoc-cus pocus*. Aye, but says the Doctor, “ circumstances “ require *εις* should be rendered *into* sometimes, particularly in Acts viii. 38 :” that is *εις* connected with *water*, must necessarily signify *into*. But you know the contrary, Sir ; Jesus sent Peter *εις την θαλασσαν*‡ ; what *into the sea* ? No, only *to*, for he had a *line and hook* to cast into it. I hope these few instances, out of numbers that might be produced, will satisfy him ; and engage him to complain no more of *partial*, and *non translations* ; but make him ingenuously to acknowledge, that *party*

\* Ibid.

† Doctrine of Justification, page 16.

‡ Matt. xvii. 27.

zeal, and a fond desire of being esteemed the *head of a sect*, hath made him thus long impose on himself, and them that hear him.

There is but one thing in his sermon and remarks on the mode of Baptism, that remains unnoticed and unanswered ; and that is so weak an one, that the bare mentioning thereof, Sir, is sufficient to expose it. “ The end of Baptism is to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, which cannot be answered any other way than by immersion ; and hence the Apostle says, *“ buried with him by Baptism, and in Baptism \*.”* What, Sir, is a representation of the burial and Resurrection of Christ, *the end of Baptism ?* I always thought the end of Baptism, was to distinguish Christians from Infidels ; to receive persons into God’s visible church ; to instruct mankind in their guilt and defilement through sin ; to hold forth to them the necessity of sanctification ; to signify the influences of the spirit ; and to oblige them who were partakers of it, to observe the law and all the precepts of him, into whose name they were baptized. So the end of Baptism, is with Antipædobaptists only an emblem of the burial and Resurrection of Christ, if Dr. Gill is their oracle : But if this is really the case, I wonder how any believer in Christ, or how any rational creature complies with it ; for the emblem is imperceptible, but by one or two of uncommon capacities. You know the Doctor vaunts, “ will any man in his senses say a corps is buried, when only a little dust or earth is sprinkled or poured on its face † ? ” But can *any man in his senses*, not to say a D. D ; assert that a person’s going by himself to the middle in water, and then joining with the minister, to put the *other half* of himself a few inches under water, and being pulled up again in three moments ; is the *representation* and emblem of *Christ’s burial and resurrection*, or hath the *least analogy* or resemblance to it ? Alas, Sir, were we to frame articles of faith for ourselves and others, from what *some men* will make scripture allusions, and their whimsical interpretations of them ; what would become of Christianity ?

\* Sermon, page 25.

† Ibid.

The Doctor knows, or should know, that φωτισθεντας Heb. vi. 4. is generally understood to mean persons baptized, and the Greek and Latin fathers in common spoke of Baptism under the word φωτισμος, from men's being in Baptism translated out of the kingdom of darkness into that of grace and light, and from their being by the Baptism of the spirit enlightened with the rays of the gospel and divine light as with those of the Sun\*; now, if dipping be the scripture mode of Baptism, nothing is more opposite to this *scripture allusion* of Baptism by irradiation; for the water prevents the sight, and for a time makes *all darkness* around them; besides, are not Christians said, to be *crucified with Christ*, and to be *planted together in the likeness of his death*; surely by the same rule, that we are plunged into water, to be buried with Christ in Baptism, and to shew we have fellowship with him also in his overwhelming sufferings; which the Doctor says “are agreeable to Baptism by immersion †,” we may not only be *signed with the Cross*, but ought to be *fastened to one*, this last, being truly the *strongest representation*, and emblem of our being crucified with Christ, and being planted together in the likeness of his death: But why doth he insist on scripture allusions? You know, Sir, where *one* makes for him, *three* are against him; are not the best of divine blessings promised and expressed by “*pouring out water upon him that is thirsty*, by *sprinkling many nations*, by, *sprinkling clean water upon us*, by, *the blood of sprinkling*, by, *sprinkling of the blood of Jesus*, by, *the Holy Ghosts being shed*, ἐξ-  
 “*ἔχεν poured out upon us*, by *an unction*, or *anointing from the holy one*, &c. &c.” do not all these more clearly favour; and more fully prove the *mode* of Baptism to be by *sprinkling*, than any he can produce for *dipping*? To borrow the Doctor's words with a little variation; what a pity it is the translators of our Bible had not rendered the word βαπτίζω to *sprinkle*, as you know they truly might; for want of it, the controversy is still continued by *watery bigots*; and many ignorant sprinkled Christians are often (to their hurt) pulled by them into the water; yet, though the word is not thus translated, but left at

\* Hence the days, on which Baptism was administered, were called *ἡμέραι τῶν φωτῶν*, days of light, and the baptized were called *φωτισζόμενοι*.

† Sermon, page 27.

large, implying all kinds of washings and applications of water; we have *proofs sufficient*, that Baptism was, and ought to be performed by *sprinkling* \*.

Besides, the determination of the *Greek Lexicons* in its favour; besides, the *Baptism of the Israelites* in the cloud and in the sea, which could be no other way, than by drops of water sprinkled on them, from the cloud and the waves; besides, the *Baptisms under the law*, which were never administered by Moses, or any of the Priests, to persons and things but by sprinkling; besides, the *Baptism of the Holy Ghost*, which according to scripture, was by his descending and resting on the Apostles, and is uniformly spoken of, as being shed and poured out †; besides, the *New Testament proofs*, that the Pharisees and others are called baptized, when only their hands were washed, by pouring water upon them; and so their tables and beds are stiled baptized, when water was (and could be) only sprinkled upon them; besides, the just meaning of the *Greek prepositions eis* and *ex* to and from, and the numerous places that can be produced where they are, and must necessarily be so rendered; besides, the *scripture allusions* of all divine blessings, under the phrases, *sprinkled and poured out*; besides the *ancient seal* of God's covenant with his people; and *initiating ordinance* into his church, to which Baptism succeeded, being applied but to one part of the body; besides, our *Lord's express declaration*, that the washing of the feet, (a less noble part of the body than the face) with a basin of water, was as effectual as if the whole body had been washed; besides all these strong arguments, not to add Nebuchadnezzar's Baptism with the dew of heaven; let but Christians consider, the *multitudes* that were baptized at Jordan and Enon, who scarcely went out provided with

\* “ This symbol of sprinkling was that which God himself chose, and appointed as a meet and apt token of the communication of covenant mercy.—This rite of sprinkling, was that alone in all sacrifices whereby their continued efficacy unto purification was expressed, thence is the blood of Christ called the blood of sprinkling, because of its efficacy unto sanctification, as applied by faith.” Owen on the Hebrews, Vol. 3. p. 378. 435.

† Acts ii. 33.

changes of raiment for dipping; let them reflect on the *three thousand*, that were converted and baptized in one day, yea in a few hours in the city of Jerusalem; who could not have time to go to their respective homes for other dresses, and if dipped naked, as we may charitably suppose some women among them, how indecent and immodest, yea what a hubbub would it have made in the streets of the holy city? Or who that reads of the jailor and his family being baptized at *midnight* in his own house, can think it was by dipping; and even in the case of the Eunuch *it is improbable*, as he was then journeying.

Really, Sir, I have often wondered, how you especially, or any of your denomination, can withstand such powerful evidence, if not *demonstration*, from reason and scripture, for Baptism being lawfully administered by *sprinkling*. If the Doctor will continue to urge the practice of the superstitious Jews, in washing the whole body; ask him, why he doth not make his Profelytes imitate them altogether? If the whole body must be washed, it is necessary it be unclothed, else the body is very little more affected, or wet, than by water's being poured on the face; but if needless, why do our brethren so insist on a person's being plunged entirely under water: It is well known, that some (if not for their noses) for part of their *garments* being above water, have been overwhelmed again; but is not this being *superstitious*, and *contentious* about dipping cloaths\*. It is unaccountably strange, that Dr. Gill or any man should censure Papists for baptizing *Bells*, &c. and yet quarrel with his pious brethren, and divide the Church of Christ, about *baptizing garments*: I see no reason to retract, what I once said, respecting his performance; that something besides Dr. Gill's knowledge and learning, must be questioned.

Though I have spoken my mind freely to you; I am persuaded, you will not consider and pray for me, as “one of the blind Sodomites groping in the dark, seeking

\* Baptismus vero sive immersio, non vestium est, sed humani corporis. Vossius de Baptismo.

“ the living among the dead,” which you remember, was a petition offered up by one of the Doctor’s lay preachers, immediately after sermon, on behalf of poor sprinkled Christians : But to do him justice, he prayed likewise (forgetting I suppose all that his Doctor had just before said against sprinkling) that we might all be *sprinkled* with the blood of Christ : In return, may he, the Doctor, and all bigots of every party and sect, be covered with humility, and have a large unction of Christian love and charity !

You may say, what avails this long letter about the *mode of Baptism*, as I know that the *Antipædobaptists* in Holland, think it immaterial whether persons are dipped, or sprinkled, and do sprinkle or pour water on most that they baptize ; and you add, the *proper subjects*, is the chief point of controversy : I grant it, and therefore shall soon lay before you, some of the chief arguments, that Baptism ought to be administered to the children of Christian parents, with great esteem, I am,

Yours, &c.

## L E T T E R V.

*Proves that Infants are lawful Members of Christ's Church.*

S I R,

W I T H the same freedom, as I communicated my thoughts to you on the *mode*, in my last letter; in this I shall speak of the *subjects* of Christian Baptism. That water Baptism is a divine institution, and to be much esteemed, and duly observed by Christians, we are agreed in; though perhaps still differ as to the quantity of water to be used in it, and the way of its being applied to the body; but this is with me, not so material, were we agreed as to the proper subjects: But notwithstanding all Dr. Gill's shrewd animadversions, and *polite language* bestowed on me, I cannot but still differ from him, and you in this point. You remember, that he said, I injuriously represented him, as to his treatment of all those that differ'd from him; but that the charge of his representing the Pædobaptists, as *unlearned*, and *ignorant of the Scriptures*, is just, my last letter sufficiently proved; as doth his own sermon: All the learned to be sure, know that βαπτίζω signifies *only to dip or plunge*; if they say it denotes secondarily, *to wash*, 'tis because what is dipped is washed: And surely the Pædobaptists have not *one text of Scripture* in proof of Baptism by sprinkling; and yet *wonderful!* All these same learned men would never be dipped, and the whole Christian world (a few hundred persons excepted) will not renounce sprinkling for themselves, or their children.

But ad rem, view the Doctor in print; “ The Baptism of infants must be wrong; since there is no command of God and Christ for it \*; and as there is no precept for the Baptism of infants, so no precedent for it in the word of God †; I defy the whole world to give one single precedent, I condemn it as unscriptural and unwarrantable ‡; and where is the good

\* Sermon, pag. 11. † Ibid. p. 15. ‡ pag. 17.  
“ sense

“sense, it is an absurdity of absurdities to affirm that “Baptism comes in the room of circumcision \* :” *Well done Goliath!* Who would but have thee for a *Champion!* You know, Sir, when preaching he bad defiance oftner by far; but don’t the words he acknowledges in print, very plainly prove, that he actually represented the greater part of the Christian world, as *fools*, and *ignorant of the Scriptures?* And doth not he treat *all children* without exception as *unclean*, not suffering them to be admitted into the church of God? How he could insinuate, that he did not look on Pædobaptists as *unclean*, is amazing; when he would not sit down with one of them at the Lord’s Supper, nor admit him into his church as a member, were he Moses, Elias, St. Paul, or an Angel from heaven.

The only *proper subjects* of Baptism, are according to the Doctor, “repenting sinners, believers in Christ, disciples of Christ, and receivers of the Spirit of God.” But can any man have the Spirit of God, or of Christ, and not be all the rest? Why such a *fourfold distinction* then? The reason is obvious, Sir, that he might receive all the professing world into his church, except *harmless infants*; Simon Magus professed himself a *penitent sinner*, a believer in and a *Disciple of Christ*, and on this profession, though he had not the Spirit of Christ, he was baptized: So that the next time, Dr. Gill brags, “That he hath precedents enough ready, for baptizing “adult persons believers,” You may inform him he hath a Scripture precedent ready, for baptizing an *adult person* an unbeliever; but I fear his own experience hath furnished too many precedents of this kind: What avails his saying, “’tis time enough to talk of infants Baptism, “when ’tis clear and evident, they have the grace of “God in them, and a meetness for the kingdom of Heaven,” for if he was never to dip any person, till that was clear and evident, was he to live Methuselah’s years, he would never baptize another: Surely, *Philip* had as good a *spirit of discernment* into a man’s faith and sincerity, as the Doctor can pretend to, and yet he baptized Simon Magus; but I fear from the well known zeal of

your *champion*, let a person but make a declaration, that he believes in Christ, and desires to be dipped, he would soon go with him, as an *excellent Christian* into the water, to do it: Is there not too great reason to say, that a desire to be overwhelmed in water, is the clearest proof in the world with some, of a *person's meetness* for the church and table of Christ? But I would hope Dr. Gill goes farther, with respect to his *people's qualifications and meetness* for the kingdom of God above: On this point I cannot but conclude, that as believing parents have strong encouragement, from the covenant of God and his gracious promise (which we shall soon see extends to them and their infant seed) to devote their children to God in Baptism; so Ministers have hence *greater encouragement*, and stronger foundation to baptize, and receive them into God's visible church, than to baptize and receive any, on their own *bare profession*, who may *deceive*, and *impose* upon them.

But this leads me to remark, that your *man of war* that bids defiance so often to the whole world, is also a *man of wit*; "'Tis absurd to send us to the old test, for " a command to observe a new test-ordinance, 'tis a gross " absurdity to send us so far back as to the 17th chapter " of Genesis, for a warrant for the ordinance of Baptism, " we might as well be sent to the first chapter of that " Book \*." But, Sir, who ever referred *him*, or any other person, to the 17th chap. of Genesis, to prove *infant Baptism*? Yourself acknowledged, you remembered none; and confident he could not produce *one* of the least note, I asked him, whether this was not a wilful misrepresentation? And it fully appears to be so, for in his answer, to prove my ignorance of the controversy, or rather his own blindness, or want of judgment; he says, " the very last writer on the subject," and produces a quotation from that Gentleman's unanswerable performance †; a quotation, which none but one whose sight and reason were very near extinguished by bigotry, and so could not distinguish, between *infant Baptism*, and the *right of infants* to the initiating seal of God's covenant, could ever have produced. It directly proves, what I

\* Sermon, pag. 11.

† Bestwick's.

had before told him, was as clear as the sun shining at noon day; that God's covenant with Abraham included infants, that they were thereby ordered to have a sign, the token of his peculiar regard put upon them, and to be ever after considered, and treated as members of his church. That this covenant was of grace, not of works, that it had not merely temporal, but chiefly spiritual promises and blessings annexed to it, is most evident; as also that it includes children with their parents; *I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, and I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God* \*: Though the land of Canaan is included in this covenant, yet nothing can be plainer, than that the blessings of grace and salvation, and of eternal life in heaven, typified by the land of Canaan, are included and chiefly intended in that comprehensive promise, *I will be their God*. Doth not the promise imply an interest in all that God hath, and is, so far as is necessary to the happiness of a creature? From the genuine sense of the various places where the phrase occurs afterward in Scripture, *God being our God*, it must include grace and glory: Our Savior proved, that the *Covenant was of grace*, and that its blessings reached to eternity, when he silenced the Sadducees with, *I am the God of Abraham, &c. God is not the God of the dead but of the living* †: Besides, Sir, doth not the Apostle say, that *Jesus Christ was a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy* ‡? Now who were the fathers, to whom the promises were made, but the Patriarchs *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*? And what were these promises, but that *God would be their God, and the God of their seed, and that all nations should be blessed in the Messiah*, that should spring from Abraham. Surely the Doctor will not say, Christ came to confirm the temporal and carnal promises made to the natural seed of Abraham; for within forty years after his death, Canaan ceased to be their inheritance. But what need I dwell

\* Genesis, xvii. 7. 8.

† Matt. xxii. 32.

‡ Romans, xv. 8, 9.

on this, St. Paul in the fourth chapter of the *Romans*, and the third of the *Galatians*, hath to a demonstration, proved that the Covenant made with Abraham was a *spiritual one*, and the spiritual and eternal blessings that were included in it, were *visibly sealed to him and his seed*, by circumcision; and if we be *Christ's*, then are we *Abraham's seed*, and heirs according to the promise \*. If an Apostle may be believed, the Covenant was of grace, a spiritual, and *everlasting one*, otherwise the dispensation by Moses must have superceded it; but is not his language, *this I say, the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ; the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannull, that it should make the promise of no effect* †: So that 'tis not impertinently nor without reason, you see, the Doctor is referred to the seventeenth chapter of Genesis; not for a *proof of infant Baptism*, but for a *proof of God's taking children into Covenant with him*, and ordering a *visible token or sign of it to be set upon them*, for the comfort of their parents. Now, Sir, seeing the Covenant of God is everlasting, and his promise to believers and their seed standeth sure; as the great blessing of Abraham was, that his children should be taken into the divine Covenant together with himself, that they should have God for their God, and have this promise sealed to them by a divine ceremony; how comes it to pass, that the children of Abraham's spiritual seed are excluded the Covenant, and must be deprived of the seal? Is it not very strange, that an *Apostle* should say, *The blessing of Abraham must come on the Gentiles*; and that, *Christ came to confirm the promises made to Abraham, that the Gentiles might glorify God*; if so great a part of this blessing, and the contents of the promises, were withheld from the *Gentile church*. Is it not stranger still, that *children* should be included in the Covenant of grace, and ordered to be taken into God's visible church, and be continued in for near two thousand years; and at the coming of Christ be deprived of their share of *spiritual promises and privileges*, be cast out of God's church, be denied the visible sign and pledge of their relation to God, and be treated as *Scythians and Barbarians*. Really, Sir, 'tis incredible to think, that children should stand in a visible relation to God,

\* Galatians, iii. 29.

† Galatians, iii. 17.

under the *law given by Moses*; and when grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, by *his Gospel of peace* (which is every where represented as increasing the privileges and blessings of mankind, and conferring greater benefits on the people of God, than they enjoyed under Judaism) they should be *cut off*, and deprived of the blessing: What think you, a Jew would have said, if he found that his believing in Christ would exclude his children from the church of God, and the privileges they enjoyed under the Jewish dispensation \*; and what think you, *his children* would have thought of Christ and christianity, if as soon as their parent became a Christian, they were deprived of all *visible relation to God, or his Church*? Tell it not at Gath, *publish it not to the Jews*, lest the *circumcised* should triumph, and be more abundantly hardened in their prejudices and clamor against Christ and his Gospel.

I have said, that *children* were members of God's visible church for near *two thousand years*, that is from Abraham to Christ; but I might have said for *above four thousand years*; yea I may add that every Covenant God made with men, included children: 'Tis most evident that the *Covenant made with Adam*, included his children, and that they were interested in it; else how came *sickness and death* on his offspring, even *upon them* who sin not actually, as he had done †? Witness also that with *Noah* ‡; that with *Abraham* §; that with *Moses and the Israelites* §; that with the *Tribe of Levi*, &c. \* \*: Children were ever esteemed in their *minority*, one with their parents, and treated accordingly. But as children were real members of God's church from the beginning; so when the visible church was to be more conspicuous, in the days of Abraham *circumcision* was appointed to him and his children, as a badge of distinction, from the rest of the world, and by

\* 'Tis plain from Acts xxi. 20, 21. the believing Jews, thought their children had a right to enter with them into the church of Christ, or were proper subjects of it, else they would not have disputed about their circumcision.

† Roman, v. 12—14. ‡ Gen. vi. 18. and ix. 8, 9:

§ Gen. xvii. 7.

§ Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12.

\* \* Numb. iii. 12, 15.

it they were received into the church of God; and from that time to the coming of the Messiah, this was the *initiating ordinance* into the visible church; he the Lord of all, changed the rite, and appointed one neither painful nor grievous, *Baptism*, in its room. Now, Sir, seeing there is not a Covenant mentioned in Scripture as between God and men, in which children were not included; seeing children were members of God's visible church *from the beginning* (for in Adam's family the visible church began), seeing that for *two thousand years* they were received into it by a *visible sign*, or external rite, by *God's express command* (who would have them marked for his property, and at several times claimed them as his) seeing that the *Jewish church*, and the *Christian*, are not different churches, but *one and the same church of God*, under different administrations and ordinances; seeing that circumcision and Baptism are *seals of the same Covenant*, and appointed for the *same use and end*; why should not the members of God's visible church, consist of the same subjects *since Christ*, as before him; why should not the privileges of the members, *parents and their children* be the same? Why should not *children of Christians* have an equal right to the same promises, and to the new and outward seal of them; as the *children of Abraham and of Israel* had to them, and to the old seal? Or, since neither God nor Christ have *revoked their privileges and right*; why should *men cut them off*, declare they are not interested in the Covenant of grace, and refuse to administer that rite to them, by which only their visible relation to God, and distinction from the rest of mankind is manifested, and by which alone they can be received into his church.

You desire me to consider what the Doctor hath said on this head, "'tis an absurdity of absurdities to affirm, that Baptism comes in the room of circumcision, since Baptism was in force, and use, *long before* circumcision was abolished; circumcision was not abolished till the death of Christ, but Baptism was administered *many years before*, to multitudes by John, and by the order of Christ, and by his Apostles. Now where is the good sense of saying one thing succeeds another, when the one said to succeed, was in use and force *long before*

“the other ceased \*.” *Excellent logician and chronologer!* I hope the D. D. had not his *diploma* for his skill in chronology, unless he calls three years, *many*. From the beginning of John’s ministry to the death of Christ, at the greatest extent was but *five years*, and from that of the Apostles but *three*: *Long before, many years indeed!* But doth the Dr. think, that the multitudes baptized by John were *Christians*; or did John’s Baptism initiate persons and bring them into the church of Christ? I hope he is not *so weak* to think it, for how was it then, that *the number of the Disciples and their names* (even after the ascension of Christ) should be only *about one hundred and twenty*†. But why doth *your champion* boast of *many*, or three years? As in some places he quotes *Maimonides*, we may hope, he hath read that writer, either in *Hebrew* or *Latin*; if he hath, that author and other cabalistical and talmudical writers (his favourite companions) inform him, that *Baptism* was administered, *many centuries of years* before John Baptist was born; and that by this external rite, the Jews received their Proselytes, *men, women and children*. How could the Doctor now, so artfully question, “whether it can be said to be the custom of the Jewish ministers to baptize parents and their children;” yea he says, “surely, it cannot be said ‡;” but his chief oracles, the *Jewish Rabbis*, tell him they did; and so have persons infinitely better versed in Hebrew antiquities, than he can pretend to; the mention of them as his opponents must certainly frighten him; Dr. Lightfoot, Dr. Whitby, the great Selden, Buxtorff, Grotius, &c. not to say his own great Apostle Dr. Gale§. The Gentiles were always considered and stiled by the Jews, *unclean*; and as washings were appointed under the law, as a means of purification from their own legal uncleanness, and they were told, *one ordinance, one law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you*§; no wonder they received them into their church by the puri-

\* Sermon, p. 12.

† Acts, i. 15,

‡ Sermon, pag. 15. Note.

§ “It must be acknowledged that the Jews do generally assert these things.” Gale’s Sermons, vol. ii. pag. 218.

§ Numb. xv. 15, 16.

fying rite *Baptism*, as well as by *circumcision*; and no man of learning and honesty can deny, but that when the Gentile profelytes of righteousness, were received into the Jewish church, *all their children were incorporated with them*, and became of the household of God. Now, Sir, as our Lord adopted this rite of washing, or *Baptism*, for initiating members into his church; is it not reasonable to suppose, he would have it applied to the same subjects, *parents and their children*; as was the custom of the Jews for centuries before? Or if he had intended to *exclude children*; would he not have given a *prohibition*, that his Apostles might not have acted according to the *common usage* of the Jews, and the church of God in past ages; you must excuse me, if I say, *he certainly would*: But did he in his great commission to them, Matt. xxviii. 19? By no means, but most evidently included children; without demurring on the *antecedent*, and *relative*, and *disagreement of gender*, in their commission (like the Doctor, \* which a mere novice in Greek knows are not uncommon) they could understand it no other way, than to *baptize the parents*, that through their preaching embraced the faith of Christ, and *all their children* with them; as was the usage at that and in former times under a more rigorous dispensation, receiving parents and their children into the church of God, by baptism and circumcision: Suppose our Lord, Sir, had not changed the rite, but ordered his Disciples to *go, disciple all nations, circumcising them in the name of the Father, &c.* Would they not have thought themselves directed, to *circumcise the children* of Christian profelytes or believers, as well as the parents, if not *every male of the family*? But the *very words* of the Apostles commission, include infants; and as they must have concluded themselves ordered, to admit children with their parents into God's visible church; had the word been *circumcise*, instead of *baptize*; why should not we suppose them directed, to *baptize children*? Especially as the great design and end of the ordinances of circumcision and baptism, *are the same*; the abscission of flesh *in one*, and the application of water *in the other*, both represent men's corruption and defilement, and the ne-

\* Sermon, pag. 14.

cessity of their being cleansed, and purified from fleshly and sinful principles; and the Doctor himself acknowledges, that one was the *initiating ordinance* into the church of God before Christ; and that *Baptism is appointed for the same end*, under the Gospel dispensation; and yet *one doth not succeed another*. Pray advise him to *retract*, or be a little more consistent; if he would but seriously and free of prejudice read Col. ii. 11, 12. he would *never more assert*, that Baptism came not in the room of circumcision; but declare it to be a *gross absurdity*, to deny it did not: For the Apostle's argument, according to *common sense*, is, that as Baptism represents and seals the same blessings, as did circumcision, therefore it was needless for Christians to be partakers of circumcision, especially as Christ's circumcision had put an end to that ceremony, and they were baptized into him, and one with him. Well, Sir, since it is fully proved, that children were *always members* of God's visible church; and received into it by *circumcision*, and also by *baptism*, (if their parents were profelyted Gentiles) since 'tis plain, the *Apostles commission* included children; and their Lord did not order them to *deviate* from the practice of the church in the use of that rite, as to the subjects; since children were never *blotted out of the Covenant of God*, or rejected by Christ, as *improper subjects* of his church (of which there is not a shadow in all the sacred records;) and since Baptism *most evidently* succeeds circumcision, for as without the last, none could be members of the church of God, in former ages, so since Christ, who *abolished circumcision*, none can stand in a visible relation to God, or be members of his church, but by *Baptism*, who dares forbid water to children, that they may be baptized, and so under *this gracious*, as well as under the *legal dispensation*, be a seed *visibly*, and *actually* devoted to their Maker?

But, Sir, the text 1 Cor. vii. 14. if there were *no more* in the New Testament, is a sufficient authority, for Ministers to receive children into their Lord's church by Baptism; you must indulge me in saying, I never yet saw or heard any tolerable explanation of this passage given by any of your brethren; *else were your children*  
unclean,

*unclean, but now they are holy.* In what sense were the children of believers, more holy than those of Pagans? Surely, the *marriages of heathens* were as lawful as those of christians, and *their children* born in wedlock, as *legitimate*; what other distinction can there be, or could the Apostle mean, by unclean and holy; than that the children of infidel and idolatrous gentiles, stood in *no covenant relation* to Jehovah, and had *no right* to the privileges of his church; but the children of christian parents, or if only one was a believer, the unbeliever was so far sanctified to the believer's use, that the children proceeding from them, were *holy*; (not merely lawfully begotten, but) as the Jews were stiled an *holy nation*, so they, were not to be accounted as the *children of unclean Gentiles*, but were to be separated from them, to be counted among the people of God, and set apart to him, by the *initiating ordinance and seal*. Suppose, Sir, it had been said to the Jews, that though one parent should be *unclean*, or a *Gentile*, yet if the other was a *Jew*, their children would be *holy*; would not every one among them, immediately have understood what was meant thereby; even that the children were peculiarly related to God, to be considered as the natural seed of Abraham *the same*, as if both parents were Jews; that hence they had a right to come into the congregation of the Lord, and they would accordingly have circumcised them; 'tis evident, the *Apostle Paul* understood the Holy Ghost to mean this, and hence he took Timothy *in right of his mother*, and circumcised him\*. In connection with this text, I may cite another of the same purport, Rom. xi. 16, 17. It not only proves that the Jewish and Christian Church is one and the same; and consequently, the *members*, and the *privileges of the members* should be the same; or at least, not be *curtailed* under the gospel dispensation; but, *demonstrates* the right, that children of christian parents, *the branches of the holy root*, have to admission into the church of God: Surely if believing gentiles are grafted into the church of God, instead of the unbelieving Jews and their seed, who are broken off; their children ought to be grafted in with them; else the Jews *before Christ*, had a great privilege,

\* Acts xvi. 1, 3.

which

which was *denied* to them under the gospel dispensation, *though believers*, and to believing gentiles also; but the Apostle's styling the *branches*, or *children*, *holy*, is a demonstration, that they stand in as *visible relation* to God as ever, and have a *right to the token* or pledge: And doth he not in the 24 ver. of the same chapter say, *that the natural branches, the Jews, shall again be grafted into their own olive tree, the church of God*; now think you, that their children will not be grafted, or entered with them? *doubtless they will*. Consider what the prophet says, with respect to this happy event: *Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God* \*. Now, Sir, if the children of *christians* are as *holy*, as those of the *Jews*; if they are declared by *inspiration* to be so, *standing in a peculiar visible relation to God*; and if the children of the *Jews* are to be grafted in again to the church together with their parents; what reasons can be assigned, why the children of believing gentiles, should not by *baptism*, be grafted in with their parents, to that church, which for *above 4000 years* always received and embraced them, and *never rejected them*. I cannot but cry out, *Oh Prejudice, Oh Bigotry, how blind are your votaries!*

You remember, the Doctor's paraphrase in his sermon on Luke xviii. 16. or Matt. xix. 14. (*which he pleases*) and how much that text grappled him; and that with all his torturing, he *could not*, and *cannot* but say, it clearly proves the Redeemer's *love* to infants, and his readiness to *receive and bless them*. And really, Sir, those whom he took up in his arms and *blessed*, or that are *capable* of divine blessing, I should be afraid to cast out of his church, and assert they have no right, to be received into it. You know I question'd whether *something within*, did not tell him, while he was wrestling the words; that they proved, children were as *dear to God*, under the *christian*, as under the *Abrahamic*, and *Mosaic dispensations*, and that they were real members of the church of Christ: Our Lord's words are, *of such is the kingdom of Heaven*;

\* Jer. xxx. 20. 22.

which

which you grant, signifies sometimes the kingdom or church of Christ here, and in some places, the kingdom of glory above; the Doctor may take which sense he pleases; if *the former*, they are expressly declared by the great head of the Church himself, *real subjects of his kingdom among men*; if he prefers the *latter sense*, they are ex confesso, partakers of the *best blessings* God can bestow on the human race above; and if so; pray, why should they be excluded from part and lot, with the blessed on earth; if members of the invisible Church, why not of the visible? I see *you laugh* at his reply, that “the kingdom of Heaven, cannot design the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation, because ’tis not national, but congregational, consisting of men\*, gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and who make a public profession of Christ; which infants are not capable of, and so cannot be real subjects of it†.”

You say, this deserves no reply, *but pity* for the writer; but how happened it, Sir, that the *children of Jews and proselyted Gentiles*, who were as incapable of making a public profession of religion, as the *infant seed of christians*; were *real subjects* of the Church of God? But leaving him to study this knotty question, and blush for his quibble; you desire me to take notice of his other reply, or *solution of the text*. I was almost in hopes, you would have overlooked this, for the Doctor’s sake; for *strange!* though our Lord declares *totidem verbis*, *that of infants is the kingdom of Heaven*; he contrariwise affirms “in fact, they themselves are not intended, only such as they, such who are comparable to them for meekness and humility, for freedom from malice, pride and ambition‡.” But I will rather believe *his master*, than him, or *any man* whatever; his *round and positive assertions*, will go but a little way, especially when

\* *Men gathered*, why had he not said women also: Surely women ought not to be excluded from the church of God, though by his expression he rejects them, as well as children. Read Gal. iii, 28. † Serm. p. 14. note. ‡ Ibid.

*scripture is directly against him*; according to his explanation and view of Christ's words and conduct; had *sheep, lambs, or doves* been brought to him, he might have been *angry with his disciples*, for forbidding the bearers to come near and present them; and have not only said, *suffer them to be brought*, but have also *taken them into his arms, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them*, and then pronounced, *that of such as they*, (who are comparable to them for temper, meekness, &c.) is the kingdom of Heaven: *Risum teneatis amice!* yourself declare, (according to a learned friend's observation\*) that there is *no just connection*, between Christ's displeasure at his disciples, for keeping Infants from him; and his giving as the reason of it, that *not to them*, but, to grown persons *quite different subjects*, his kingdom belonged. Had our Lord's intention and reason, been what Dr. Gill hath asserted, he certainly might as well have taken *sheep, &c.* into his arms as the Children; but indeed, Sir, his embracing Infants in his arms, and blessing them; his exhorting his disciples *to take heed not to despise such little ones, not one of them*, declaring that they have Angels to attend them†; and that of such is the kingdom of Heaven, they are part of his church and kingdom; fully prove that they are *beloved of God, members of his visible Church, and ought to be esteemed, and treated as such, by all his ministers*‡.

Here I would beg you, to give the Doctor some friendly, and *necessary advice*: If he publishes another edition of his sermon, or *any thing more on the subject*; caution him, for *decency's sake*, to give the *apostles of Christ* a little better character, if he doth not me; he says “ these “ children might be diseased, and so brought to Christ

\* Towgood.  
Mark ix. 36.

† Matt. xviii. 2, 10. compared with

‡ Even Dr. Gale opposes Dr. Gill on this text; he confesses, that Christ did *in fact* intend *the infants themselves*, and not such as they; and draws an argument from thence to silence parents fears concerning their childrens safety and happiness, should they die unbaptized. Gale's Serm. V. 2. p. 179.

“ to

“ to be cured of their diseases \*.” If this was really the case, what *monsters* must the Apostles be, to reject, and endeavor to put them and their tender mothers away, when they knew a *touch* of their master’s hand, yea a *word* from his lips, would have cured them, and *preserved their lives*. Knowing a little what parental affection is, I cannot but think, *he is destitute of it*, or bigotry forces him to say and unsay just to serve his own turn : But his character of the Apostles, is not to be wondered at, since he plainly censures the wisdom, and goodness, and moral government of God his maker ; asserting, that children *ought not* to be admitted into the visible Church, till it appears they are of the invisible†. But, why did God *command them* to be admitted of old, and *continued them* in his visible Church, thousands of years ? Why did not *Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, the Prophets and Jewish Priests* argue, as Dr. Gill ; and of their own head, *without divine authority*, exclude them ? Truly, Sir, because they *modestly* reflected, that God excelled them in wisdom, and well knew who were the most proper subjects of his own Church ; and they had likewise *clearer views* of his grace to their Children, and were *more grateful* for it. The Doctor himself acknowledges the necessity of Infants being regenerated, before they can enter the kingdom of glory ; must he not then either *damn all* that die in childhood ; or maintain that some are born again of the spirit : And if *of the spirit*, why not *of water* ? if they are sanctified, by the Holy Ghost’s being shed *ἐκχεεῖν* poured out upon them ; why should not water, which is but the emblem, be also *poured out upon them in Baptism* ?

Again, Sir, doth not Acts ii. 39. connected with Gal. iii. 7, 16, 17 and 29. *fully authorize* the ministers of Christ, to receive children into his visible Church ; which can *only be done*, by Baptism. All who are believers in Christ, are *Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise* ; and as the covenant of God with Abraham, is of grace, and *in full force* ; so the promise and blessings contained in it abide, and extend by *scripture au-*

\* Serm. p. 13.

† Ib. p. 14. note.  
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thority,

*thority*, not merely to them that believe, but to their children; *the promise is to you, and to your Children*; not to your Children, when *grown up to adult years*, and capable of making a public profession of their faith; for what advantage then had the *Jew* or the *Gentile believer*, of *old*; or what advantage hath the *Christian* now, either *parent or child*, above the *Ethiopian*, or the *Indian Savage*? The Apostle's meaning *must be*; the promise is to you, and to your Children in their *infantile state*; they have a right, to all the grants and privileges of the gracious covenant, God made with Abraham; and as his Children received the *appointed token* and sign of it, so your seed are to be *baptized with water*, which is the *christian circumcision*, the appointed token and seal *under the gospel*, and become *visible members* of Christ's Church: You will bear with me, if I add; that the exposition which the Doctor and others of your brethren, give of those passages, *hardly agrees with common sense*; they too much satisfy themselves, with saying, "that the sense is "not that the Pædobaptists give;" and yet they will not give us a better, *one more natural and just*.

You join with the Doctor, in opinion, "that if Infants are real subjects of the church, they must have "an equal right to the Lord's supper as to Baptism, of "which they are equally capable\*." *Far from it, Sir*: Your champion will inform you, that one ordinance *initiates* into the Church; and the other *establishes*; was not Simon Magus a *real subject* of the Church, and yet I believe *Dr. Gill* would not chuse to say, he had an *equal right* to the Lord's supper as to Baptism; but Children are not so much excluded from the supper, for *want of a right to it*, Sir, as for want of a *proper capacity* for it; which cannot be justly said of them with respect to Baptism. In Baptism, the subjects are to be wholly passive, if the scripture Baptisms under the law, (sprinkling water and blood, &c. upon the priests, the people, the book of the law, utensils of the tabernacle, &c.) are to be our precedents; and I could almost appeal to yourself, whether the *natural idea*, which the word *Bap-*

\* Serm. p. 14. note.

*tism* conveys, is not *passive*; that of water's being *applied to the body*, and not the body's being applied, or plunged into the water; but in the supper, the *word of God* requires those who partake of it, to be *active*; they must be of years sufficient, to examine themselves respecting their knowledge, faith, love, repentance and other *spiritual things*; they are not only to *take* the elements, and *eat*, and *drink*, but must be capable also, of *discerning the Lord's body*, of *understanding* the meaning of the christian symbols, and in the *exercise of christian graces receive them*.

You say, " the Doctor hath proved, that faith and " repentance are scripture prerequisites to Baptism, and " that on this the controversy hinges." *Doth it so?* Then if *any candor* is left, if the *mind is open to conviction*, the controversy must soon be at an end: I know the Doctor insisted much in his preaching, as he hath in his printed sermon \*, on the *order of words* in scripture; the Apostles commission, was go, teach, and having *first taught*, then *baptize them*; so *repent* and be baptized, and he that *believeth* and is baptized; and again, the Corinthians *hearing, believed*, and were baptized. Alas, Sir, what a pity it is, such stress should be laid on the *placing of words* †, especially by *Dr. Gill*, who ought to have been the *last man in the universe*, to have done it; I have already been obliged to set *John* against *Gill*, now I am forced to set *Gill* against *John*. Hear what he says, " The Apostle " Paul in recounting the several blessings of divine grace " Rom. viii. 30. places vocation before justification, as " something antecedent to it, from whence it is con- " cluded that vocation is in order of time before justifi- " cation: to which I reply; *that the order of things is " frequently inverted in scripture*. The Jews have a saying " that there is neither first nor last in the law, i. e. it doth " not always observe *to put that first, which is first*; and " *that last which is last, but frequently changes the order*; " *so that strictly, nothing is to be concluded from thence*. " And as this is obvious in the law, and in the other

\* P. 19, 20.  
and preached.

† 'Tis said Mark i. 4. that John baptized

“ writings of the Old Testament, so it is, *in the books of the New Testament*; where it is easy to observe, that the order of the three persons in the Trinity, is not always kept to \*;” with other instances he adds. You see, Sir, *he is crushed* under the weight of his own arguments; *John Gill says, the order of things is frequently inverted and changed in scripture, both in the Old and New Testament; so that nothing strictly is to be concluded from thence*: And yet, *the order of words, is Goliath’s sword, spear, helmet, and coat of mail, when he marches forth for adult Baptism*. Here I might give over, *for the mighty man is fallen*; his own words have taken hold upon him; and he certainly is not able to *look up*; but as you exhort me to be merciful; and to consider, that *more eminent, consistent, and learned men*, than he, have objected “ that faith and repentance are scripture qualifications for Baptism;” and think yourself, “ that children ought not to be baptized, because not capable of believing,” I will lift the Doctor up, and return him his sword, “ Infants are not capable of believing and repenting, and therefore not to be baptized, or admitted into the church of God.” But surely, they are as *capable of those things*, and as *worthy to be members of the visible church*, as the *Israelite infants*; who *nevertheless*, were commanded to be *circumcised*; and so *became debtors to do the whole law of God*; and why therefore, should not *children of Christian parents be baptized*, and so *become debtors*, or be laid under strong obligations, and *early engagements*, to obey the precepts of him *into whose holy name they are baptized* †: If the Doctor still objects, “ they are not capable of making a public profession of their faith at baptism:” Truly, Sir, *as good, and as long an one*, as the *Reverend Mr. Carmichael* did at his; which you well remember, was only a long and deep, *Oh!* You retort, “ What use is baptism of to children, what benefits do they receive by it?” But may not I ask in return, of what use was circumcision to *Ishmael and Esau*, and to the Jewish

\* Gill’s doctrine of Justification. p. 70.

† That children may be brought under religious, as well as civil obligations by their parents, the word of God abundantly declares.

children; and what benefits did they receive? Yea of what use or benefit was Baptism to multitudes baptized by John in Jordan and at Enon; or to Simon Magus, and to numbers of those, who have renounced their infant Baptism, and been dipped by Dr. Gill and others, at adult years? But *notwithstanding* many who are baptized, are never the better for it; yet, God will have a *visible church* in the world, and his visible seal is to be set upon them, whom he prescribes; he hath declared, *children* to stand in a covenant relation to him, and always *treated them as such*; it is not *for men* then, *to discriminate*, and *be wiser than God*; and as I would sooner baptize a child, on the *Covenant and promise of God*, and the *parent's faith*, than an adult person (who may deceive me) on his *verbal profession*; so as the bounties of providence are sanctified to our use, by prayer and thanksgiving, I doubt not, the *ordinance of Baptism* is frequently *sanctified* to the subject, as well as other *divine institutions*, to them that attend upon them. But should no real benefit redound to the infant baptized, any more than to the adult person; yet should it be taken away by death, before years of discretion; parents have this to comfort them; that by *Baptism* they devoted them to God, and he visibly received them into his church; the seal of his gracious covenant and of spiritual blessings was set upon them, and therefore justly conclude, that he is a God in covenant to them, that *because he loved the fathers, therefore he chose their seed*\*; and hath taken them *as his heirs*, to dwell with himself for ever, and possess an incorruptible inheritance. I confess, Sir, it surprizes me, to hear you object against infants Baptism, for their *want of faith, repentance*, and *incapacity* of receiving any benefit by it; *benefit they have*, and may receive; you acknowledge they *must have grace*, if they ever inherit glory; and have not you and the Doctor, read in the *New Testament*, of one who was baptized, *without faith*, and *without repentance*; and who was *more incapable* of receiving *moral benefits* by *Baptism*, than Dr. Gill can pretend infants are; I was going to cry out, *Behold, Sir, for your joy*; but I had forgot; how-

\* Deut. iv. 37.

ever,

ever, you will suffer me to speak to myself and others ; *Behold all ye Christian parents, for your comfort and establishment in this matter, this instance is no other then Jesus the great head of the church !* You doubtless are convinced, Sir ; but I hear the Doctor saying, “ I will not, unless “ one come from the dead,” or “ unless you show me “ express commands for infant Baptism.” Why, what are *all the texts and proofs I have produced ;* but so many *express commands and warrants ; more express,* than any he can show me, for *not keeping the Jewish sabbath,* but the first day of the week ; or for *not abstaining from blood and things strangled ;* or *for admitting women to the Lord’s Supper ;* or for his *manner of plunging them into the water ;* or for *refusing to admit children into God’s visible church ;* or for *casting them out :* I have showed him many, and can show him many more *express commands,* for receiving them into the church of God, by the appointed *initiating seal ;* let him, or any other person, *show me but one text,* where God blotted them out of his covenant ; or Christ rejected them as improper subjects of his church and kingdom ; or where either refused to acknowledge them as theirs ; I will lay my hand upon my mouth, and my mouth in the dust, and *the next week,* beg the Doctor to *baptize me,* either by *sprinkling,* or *dipping,* which he pleases \*.

But, I find *scripture precepts* will not satisfy Dr. Gill ; he objects there is *no scripture precedent :* “ I defy the “ whole world to give one single precedent † :” *of what ?* The *Old Testament,* and his *rabbinical writers* also, will give him a thousand precedents, of children’s being received into the church of God ; “ Aye, but where is “ one precedent of infant Baptism ?” Why if children of Gentile Profelytes were received into the Church of God, under the Mosaic dispensation, as *it is certain* they were ; it was by *Baptism,* as well as by *circumcision ;* and as the Gospel of grace, that broke down the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles, and made both one ; cannot be supposed, (*without great scandal to it*) to have cut off children from the covenant and church of God ;

\* Provided it be summer.

† Serm. page 17.

there was *no other way* of receiving them into it, (by the Apostles and first preachers of Christ) but by Baptism : But how, Sir, could the Doctor so far forget himself, and act so *grossly inconsistent* ; as to affirm there was no precedent for infant Baptism in the word of God, and what is *still worse*, with so much assurance, *defy the whole world to give a single precedent* ; and within a few pages of his defiance, he gives *one himself* : “ The Israelites were “ baptized in the cloud and in the sea, and with great “ propriety may it be called a Baptism, as that is, by im- “ mersion \*.” A more unfortunate instance for immersion, I proved he could not have produced † ; but pray, Sir, be *ingenuous* ; were not the *children* of the Israelites, *baptized at this time*, as well as the *parents* ; or was there *another miracle* wrought to prevent it ? You cry, *forgetful inconsistent Doctor* ! Come, this is *one scripture instance*, or *precedent* ; and notwithstanding your *skilful advocate’s* judicious reasonings upon them ; I believe the *households baptized* by St. Paul, will produce *some more* ; at least *will prove*, that the Apostles acted, as the Jews did under the law ; as the *faith of the parents*, or head, entitled the *children and household* to circumcision, so likewise to *baptism*, and they had it.

You remember, how the Doctor in preaching, complained of the *unfairness* of the Pædobaptists ; in putting him and his brethren, to prove there were no children in the scripture households ; and at last, how he vaunted, that *he was capable of proving this negative* †. I listened with great attention for the *proofs*, but heard none, but *bare assertion* : As to the jailor’s family indeed, I observed to you, he proved there were no children there, because it is said, *he believed in God with all his house* : He hath now added, “ He that can find any other in his house, be- “ sides all that were in it, must be reckoned a very sa- “ gacious person §.” You must, Sir, reply with me ;

\* Sermon, page 26.

† Letter 17. page 26.

‡ Sermon, page 16. But suppose he could have proved there were no children in the households ; it is most evident from scripture, had there been any, they would have been baptized.

§ Sermon, page 17.

that *John Gill himself is that very sagacious person*: Should you, or any other person, not just of his *supra* size, say, that *Christ died for all men* \*; *tasted death for every man* †; *gave himself a ransom for all* ‡; and that, *God would have all men to be saved* §, &c. he would certainly with a *feverish fervor of spirit*, affirm, that *all* in these passages, and that *emphatical phrase every man*, did not mean or include *all*, but *strenuously insist* on it, that there were *thousands* if not *millions* excepted. Tell *Doctor sagacious*, to remember his darling axiom, “*what proves too much, proves nothing*.” Is it not easier to reconcile the *phraseology*, with the jailors having children in his house; than it is, Sir, to suppose, that *every individual* in it, should have *new hearts, penitent spirits, and saving faith*, in the *same nick of time*, to be *baptized all together at midnight*? Truly it is, and the Doctor’s argument is so weak, that for once I will help him to a much better, borrowed from one of his brethren: “It may very much be “questioned, whether the jailor had any children, seeing “it hath been observed, that for many years together, “not one child was born to all the jail-keepers in all “the county of Essex.” This is *demonstration*! but query; if every jailor had a *river, or large pond* in his house? Else, the instance of the *scripture jailor* and his families, being *baptized straightway, in the same hour of the night*; will quite demolish your *dipping fabric*. But was the same enquiry also made into *every Lydia’s family* through the county? Suppose none of them had any children; what proof is that, there were none in the *scripture Lydias*? It is a pity, Dr. Gill had not followed the example of his *ingenuous and warm predecessor* Dr. Gale; who after saying “it is easy to shew; that “*all those* who were baptized in the *scripture families*, “heard the word preached, believed in Christ, rejoiced, “and received the Holy Ghost ||,” mentioned Crispus, the Corinthians, and the jailor; but *fairly omitted* Lydia and her household; he wisely judged, if he produced it, it would make his *hearers stare*, if not con-

\* 2 Cor. v. 14.

† Heb. ii. 9.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 6.

§ Verse 4.

|| Gale’s Sermon, Vol. 2. page 180.

found him; the word of God faith, *The Lord opened her heart, and she was baptized and her household*: Infidels must from this text, see she had *no children* under her roof, and that *every one* of the family, *heard the word preached, believed in Christ, &c. &c.* and were *baptized on their own profession of faith*! This is a *just conclusion* without doubt; worthy of *Dr. Gill*, as well as *Dr. Gale*; but the best excuse for them, I think, is that they have not read the passage: There is not a word in scripture, of any of *Lydia's household* believing, or their *so much as attending*, to the words of the Apostles, but of *hers only*; and yet when *she believed*, we are told *Baptism was administered to her, and her household*; after the same manner, you see, as the former seal was applied to *Abraham*, and the *Jewish households*. *Dr. Gill* hath indeed in his printed Sermon\*, asserted, "That those in *Lydia's house* were "brethren, whom afterwards the Apostles went to see, "and whom they comforted, and so not infants." But he hath not referred us to the text for this; doubtless for fear of being detected; but, Sir, if you will turn to Acts xvi. 40. you will soon discover, either your champions *honestly*, or *judgment*, as well as his resolution; *And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: And when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.* What can be plainer, than that the brethren, were the *Christian believers of the city*, and not *Lydia's natural brethren*; besides is it not a little wonderful, that there should be several brethren grown up to men, living in one house, and a *sister* be the master of the household? His reasoning concerning the household of *Stephanas*, you confess is futile, and suffer me to add, *beneath a school boy.*

Thus, Sir, I have freely given you, some of the many reasons of my faith and practice, *respecting Baptism*; why I present my own children to God in that ordinance; and why I *Baptize* those of christian parents: Was I writing professedly to *Pædo Baptists*; many more things might be offered, that would greatly tend to *relieve, and strengthen their minds* on this subject. You see

we have all the *reasonable proof* in the world ; that as Christ accepted the faith of parents, and for it healed and blessed many of their children ; so his Apostles *baptized whole households on the faith of the parents*. If the faith, and profession of Jews and *gentile proselytes* entitled *all their children* to part and lot, in the church and heritage of God under the *mosaic dispensation* ; why should not the same privilege and right, appertain to the *children of believers in Christ* ; and if they received *natural benefit* from Christ, in having their maladies cured, *on account of the faith of their parents* ; why may we not suppose, *they did, may, and do receive* at times, *spiritual benefit and blessings*, on the same account : Really, Sir, to suppose the contrary, would be to say, *God is more inclined to, and delights rather in justice, than in mercy* ; that they have suffered, and do suffer, on account of *their first parents disobedience*, is undeniable ; and *many instances* might be produced from sacred and profane history, of childrens suffering through, or being involved in the guilt and punishment of their parents evil deeds\* ; and why should they not be considered on the other hand as *parts of pious parents*, and from their relation to them, be *distinguished, and blessed of God and of men*, under the *Christian*, as well as the *legal dispensation* ?

You see, Sir, *we have scripture authority, and precedents enough*, for admitting children into Gods visible church ; and for considering and treating them as his property, and the members of Christ's kingdom ; as Dr. Gill was so full of his *defy's* ; you remember, I defy'd him, *to produce one scripture warrant, or precedent, for refusing children the seal and token of God's covenant with his professing people*, (which they enjoyed near 2000 years,) or *for excluding them the Church of God* ; You likewise remember, he provoked me to defy him, *to produce one scripture precept, or precedent for delaying the Baptism of children of christian parents, till grown up* ; or, *for baptizing adult persons born of such parents*, (which are his subjects of Baptism.) But behold his

\* Dr. Gill would do well to consider Gen. xvii. 14. Exod. xx. 5. 1 Kings xi. 12, 13. 2 Chron. xxx. 9. Jer. xlix. 11. Ps. xxxvii. 25, &c.

Sermon and notes ; *my defiances are in full force* ; he hath not been able to produce *any warrant or precedent*, to turn against me, or to *defend himself*. He thinks it indeed, “ unreasonable to expect and require Scripture precedents “ of the Baptism of adult persons, born of Christian “ parents \* ; ” yet you know, a *mere novice in chronology* would not think it so, on the same account that he doth ; “ such instances would require length of time, a course “ of years.” But the *same oracle* that so boldly asserted before him, “ it hath been often and fully proved to de- “ monstration, that the word *baptize* signifies *only* to dip “ into the water † ; ” informs him also, “ that some of “ the children of the first converts were at the time of “ the Apostles writing his Epistle to the Romans, which “ was a *considerable time* after the first foundation, even “ *fifteen years*, members of that church ‡ : ” Now as one of his most zealous brethren, thought *fifteen years*, sufficient for children to grow up and be baptized, and received into the church ; surely *sixty years after Christ*, which you know is the compass of the *new testament history*, must be a *length of time*, and *course of years*, sufficient to furnish many precedents of such persons, had that been the *Scripture practice*.

As the Doctor hath not pleaded *antiquity* in his favor in his printed sermon, we may conclude, he is at length convinced 'tis against him ; though in a late publication (which I cannot at present animadvert on) he hath declared *infant Baptism*, to be a *Popish invention and foelery* : What doth this manifest, Sir ? it shews——but I spare him : He must be an *ignoramus* in chronology and ecclesiastical history, that thus asserts ; for who knows not, that the *first Pope*, or *universal Bishop*, was *Boniface III.* in the seventh century *Anno 606* ¶ ; and the Doctor himself must know, if not from his own learning and reading, yet from the *references* of his opponents ; that *Augustin* in the *fourth century* maintained that the Chris-

\* Sermon, pag. 17. Note. † Dr. Gale's Sermons, vol. ii. pag. 144. ‡ Ibid. pag. 203.

¶ The title *Papa* was not peculiar to the Bishops of Rome, but was given to all Bishops in the first centuries of the church ; We frequently meet with *Papa* or *Pope Cyprian*, &c. : in *Boniface* the third, the *Papacy* begun.

tian church had always held and *always practised infant Baptism*: And in another place, says, “that infants “are to be baptized, is the authority of the universal “church, without all doubt delivered by *Christ and his Apostles*.” And his cotemporary Pelagius, whose interest it was, to have denied and objected against his opponents, the *non practice* of infant Baptism, by the Apostles and primitive church, declares himself, “to be defamed and “slandered by some, in their reporting him, as denying “the sacrament of Baptism to infants,” and adds, “that he never heard, no not of an impious heretic, who would “say this concerning infants.” And ’tis very remarkable, Sir, that in all the list, of what are stiled *heretics* and *heresy’s*, from the Apostles time to the eleventh century, you meet with *none* that deny infant Baptism\*: But not only in the *fourth*, in the *third century* also, there are proofs of it; *Cyprian*, and a *council of sixty six Bishops*, and *Origen*, wrote of, and *practised infant Baptism*: Yea, in the *second century*, *Clemens Romanus*, and *Irenæus* were like minded, and *Justin Martyr*, also, who lived within *forty years* of the Apostles. Instead of infant Baptism being a *Popish invention*, and one of their relicks, adored by Protestants; an opposition to, and the denial of it, is rather to be attributed to *Popish corruptions and errors*: *Tertullian*, whom your champion hath so much gloried in, would have the Baptism of infants and others, even grown persons, delayed for fear of their afterwards falling into sin; but instead of denying infant Baptism he fully proves ’twas the practice of the church in his time (*the second century*) and insists on its being performed by sprinkling, in cases of necessity even by *lay persons*: His notion was, that Baptism washed away sin. This tenet was adopted afterward by the *Romish church*, and I really believe, first led some in the *eleventh century*, to object against infant Baptism; you see, your *great Dr. Gale* strenuously urges this notion, “one use and end and design of Baptism, was “for the remission of sins †. It certainly doth conduce

\* We read indeed of Hemerobaptists, who every day unless they were baptized, did not eat; nay, and unless they cleansed with water their beds and tables or platters, and cups and seats, would not make any use of them. Clem. Apost. Const. Lib. 6. sect. 6.

† Gale’s Sermon, vol. ii, pag. 193.

“ to

“ to the purging and purifying us from, and the remission  
 “ and washing away of all the sins we have committed \*.  
 “ Unless they are so washed away by Baptism, they will  
 “ remain upon us unremitted †; these are *his very words*,  
 and a truly Popish tenet; and could I believe it with all  
 my heart, I must be myself an advocate for Antipædobaptism  
 (unless in cases of necessity). I should not only refuse  
 Baptism, to all till they were *adult*, but put off *my own*  
*Baptism* to the last hour of life, and advise *every friend* to  
 do the same; for then we should be, *positively sure of the*  
*remission of our sins, and of salvation.*

To this *fatal error*, which the church of Rome hath  
 established by laws and canons; I cannot but attribute  
 the *rise of your sect*: But whatever was the cause, tell  
 Dr. Gill, it greatly concerns him to produce a *body of*  
*Christians* before the *eleventh*, or any *writer of note*, before  
 the *sixteenth century*, who were against baptising the infants  
 of Christian parents, and for limiting that ordinance to  
 adult persons: 'Tis certainly, a *just conclusion*, that if any  
 are to be charged with *innovations*, and *human inventions*,  
 and with *acting without scripture warrant or precedent*, 'tis  
 Dr. Gill in denying children the appointed token and seal  
 of God's covenant with, and favor to them, and in his  
 excluding them the visible church. If they were struck  
 out of the Covenant, and cast out of the church of God;  
 'tis not *unreasonable* (as they were four thousand years in  
 it) to demand some proof *when*, if not a clear reason or  
 two *why*: 'Till then, I know not how you can help con-  
 cluding with me, that God, is a *God in Covenant with the*  
*children of Christians*, as he was with those of the *Pa-*  
*triarchs and Jews*; and therefore, *his seal of Baptism might,*  
*ought, and should be applied to them.*

I intended to have summed up the number, and set  
 before you the force of the several arguments, advanced in  
 this and my former letters; but that I may not be tedious,  
 shall reserve this for another epistle; till when am,

Yours, &c.

\* Ibid. pag. 194.

† Ibid. pag. 199.

## L E T T E R VI.

*Recapitulates the chief Arguments against Dr. Gill, and concludes with wholesome advice to him.*

S I R,

I Beg leave to offer you *one letter* more, on the subject of Baptism, which according to my promise, shall be as brief as possible ; not to reinforce what hath been advanced against *Dr. Gill*, with any auxiliaries (*though there are many troops at command*) I shall only recapitulate by way of question, some of the chief arguments, I have used in defence of my own belief and practice.

Have I not as much right to fall out with a man and vilify him, because his face is not like mine ; as because his religious opinions and judgment, are different from mine ?

If I cannot reach the same standard as another, or if I differ with a Christian brother in a few indifferent things ; why should we not agree to differ, and yet love, communicate with, and behave towards each other as brethren ?

Why should a man insist on the right of private judgment for himself, and refuse it to others ; or for their using it, censure and treat them, as fools, unlearned, ignorant of the scriptures, and unclean ?

Is it reasonable, for a man to complain of having what he hath done, and is constantly doing to others, returned unto him again ; or shall the illiberal, uncharitable, passionate man, complain of being gently reproved ?

Is that man a pertinent judicious preacher, whose discourse hath not the least reference to, connection with, or foundation in his text ?

How could the Apostle not mean, or include the moral law in *Dr. Gill's* text ; and yet rather design the chief branches and sum of it ?

Why should the Holy Ghost, and Dr. Gill's characters of the moral law, be so widely different; or why should the moral law be filed a fiery law, grievous, the ministration of condemnation and death, &c. and yet the sum of it, love to God and our neighbour not deserve, or be distinguished with the same epithets?

What sort of an ambassador must he be, who represents his sovereign as a tyrant and an Egyptian taskmaster; when the first words of his instructions, and all his own experience from the hour of his birth, prove him gracious and merciful?

What must Christians think of the servant that endeavours to set aside, what his master came to establish and perfect; Or that would persuade men they are not bound to obey, what his Lord hath strictly enjoined him and them, to fulfill to a tittle.

What reason can be given, or Scripture produced, for a minister's exalting positive institutions, and external rites, above moral precepts?

Is it not an odd way of instructing men in righteousness, and building them up in holiness, to tell them they are not under the law, and the Gospel hath no commands, but is all promises?

What authority is there to say men are justified and pardoned, when they continue in unbelief, and their actions prove them children of disobedience and of wrath?

If an ungodly person, as such, is justified and absolved; how can the divine perfections be vindicated, and the word of God be true?

How can a being that never sinned, yea, how can a non-entity, be charged with guilt or pardoned?

If men are justified pardoned and freed from punishment from eternity, how can they be justified by and through faith; or what occasion is there for preaching, and other divine institutions, or what need have men to fear sin, and abstain from it?

If the purpose of God justifies men from eternity, why doth it not glorify them also; or why should not the world be created from eternity?

If Christ's commands are not grievous, and dipping in cold countries, is grievous, tending to endanger the chastity, health, and even life of his ministers and people; how can dipping be Christ's command?

Can we suppose the compassionate Jesus instituted an ordinance for his Disciples strict observance, of which many through weak and infirm constitutions, &c. &c. cannot safely partake, and by which many have been injured, (if not fallen into their long sleep?)

As iron constitutions, brawny arms, and great strength of body, would be necessary, if dipping was the only lawful mode of Baptism; should not our Lord or his Apostles have given some rules, for the choice of such persons to minister in the church?

If washing the whole body, is necessary to Baptism, why is not the body naked; or if the naked head and shoulders are sufficient, why not the face, the chief part of man?

Why should circumcision which affected but one part of the body, be sufficient and acceptable to God, and Baptism the seal that succeeded it, be the reverse, unless the whole body, or rather the naked face and garments are affected?

Is that man consistent, who censures Papists for baptizing bells, &c. and yet divides the church and members of Christ about baptizing cloaths?

What greater virtue and efficacy, is there in a large, than in a small quantity of water's being applied to the baptized; are they the holier that have the most, or doth the more water, naturally make the baptized more fiery and zealous?

Why

Why should men make alterations in, and deviate from one positive and solemn ordinance, more than another ?

Why should the least quantity of bread and wine be sufficient and effectual in the Lord's Supper, but a large pool of water or a River be essential to Baptism ?

How can any man maintain that βαπτίζω signifies only to dip, when all the learned, and the word of God, tell him it also signifies to wash, to pour water upon, and to sprinkle ?

Why should men insist, on the Israelites being baptized in the cloud and in the sea as a proof of Baptism by immersion, when the Egyptians were the persons immersed in the sea, and the Israelites were only sprinkled from the cloud, and with the spray of the waves as they passed through the channel on dry ground ?

Were the Apostles baptized with *wind*, or with *sound*, as of wind ; or really with the Holy Ghost ?

If it is thought sufficient to have the spirit poured out, and the blood of Christ sprinkled, upon us, for the purification of the conscience and salvation of the soul ; why is not the sprinkling of water in Baptism sufficient for the body, without being dipped all over ?

Why should the Scriptures declare the several sprinklings under the law, were Baptisms ; or still those persons baptized, whose hands only were washed, if the whole body's being dipped, was essential to Baptism ; or how could our Lord tell his Apostles that they were as clean, when their feet only were washed, as if their whole body had been so ?

Why should men lay such stress on going into the water, and coming out of it, when the Greek words εἰς and ἐκ as properly signify to, and from, and especially when it forces them to find caves in mountains, and in men's bodies for Christ to go into ?

What greater representation of a burial is there, in a man's going voluntarily into the water, and then joining with another; to put the other half of his body under water, for a moment or two, than in water being poured on him; or when a dead body is buried, is it by earth being poured in upon it, or like adult dipping; or are all that are dipped, actually buried with Christ?

If Scripture allusions are to have any weight, why should one that is forced, be preferred to three natural and obvious ones.

Is it reasonable to suppose the Eunuch was dipt all over in the midst of his journey; or the jailor and his household, who were baptized at midnight; or the three thousand men and women that were baptized in Jerusalem, who must then go home through the streets in sad plight; or the multitudes that were baptized promiscuously by John at Jordan and Enon, who all must have changes of raiment, or must stand and travel in wet cloaths?

As Baptism is the emblem of regeneration, in which the subjects, are according to Dr. Gill wholly passive; why should they not in the other, which they are when sprinkled, but not when dipped?

Why should Antipædobaptists in England, lay greater stress on dipping, than their brethren in Holland; who many of them administer Baptism by pouring water on the subject?

If the Jewish and the Christian churches, are but one and the same Church of God, under different administrations and ordinances, why should not the privileges be equally extended to parents and their children?

How could the blessing of Abraham come upon the Gentiles, if their children are not included in the covenant and Church of God, and are deprived of the seal?

Why

Why should the original seal and token of God's covenant with his people, by which their children were admitted into his church, be applied to them by divine command two thousand years; and when a more gracious and extensive dispensation took place, the seal be refused them by men, without any scripture warrant, or the least revocation of the privilege?

Why should infants be cast out of the visible church, without a positive express command; as they were taken in by one?

Why should not God be a God in covenant with the children of Christians, as well as with those of the Patriarchs and Jews?

If children are now excluded the visible church, are not the privileges of the Christian dispensation, less than those of the mosaic?

Can it be supposed, that the believing Jews would have so readily embraced the Gospel, if their children must not have entered the church with them, but be looked on and treated as the children of unbaptized Infidels?

Why did the believing Jews dispute, whether their children should be circumcised, if they did not esteem them proper subjects of Christ's church?

Why should the children of believing parents be treated as unclean Gentiles, standing in no relation to God; when the Apostles have pronounced them Holy, and declared that the promises not of the temporal covenant, but of the covenant of Grace extend to them?

Why should children be debarred from the sign and seal, when they are acknowledged capable of possessing the thing signified and sealed, spiritual blessings?

Why should it be thought that Baptism did not succeed circumcision, one being the initiating ordinance into the church of God before Christ, and the other appointed

pointed for that end, by, and since Christ; or why should not Baptism be applied to the same subjects, infants now, as circumcision was of old?

Why should faith and repentance be made pre-requisites for Baptism, or initiating persons into God's visible church, any more under one dispensation than another? or why are not the children of christian parents, as proper members of the Church, as the children of Jews and Profelyted Gentiles?

How could the Apostles understand their commission any other way, than to baptize and receive children with their parents into the visible church, unless prohibited; as it had been the practice of the Jews for centuries before, respecting their Profelytes?

Why should the order of words be more insisted on, in one text of scripture than in another, especially in that of the Apostle's commission, as all the Jewish children were first circumcised, or made disciples, and then taught.

Why were infants taken into our Saviour's arms and blessed by him, and declared members of his kingdom or church in earth and in heaven; if they were not proper subjects, and he did not intend they should be treated as favourably under the Gospel, as during the legal dispensation?

Must not those that are members of the kingdom of glory, be interested in the covenant of grace, why then should children be denied the seal of the covenant?

Why should men refuse to receive those into the visible church, whom God graciously receives into Heaven, and on whom he confers the best of blessings?

Why should not there be children in the households that were baptized, as well as in most others; or why should not they be baptized on the faith of their parents, as well as the children of the Patriarchs and Jews be circumcised on the faith of theirs?

If

Why should God punish children for the sins of parents, and not bless them for their parents faith and holiness, or why should he be more merciful to the bodies of children and others, for the faith of parents and friends, than to their souls?

If Christ was baptised without faith and repentance, and who was incapable of receiving any moral benefit thereby, why should not children be Baptized; or what greater benefit do adult persons receive at their Baptism, than do children?

Why should it be thought unreasonable, to require scripture precedents of persons Baptized at adult years who were born of christian parents, when the history of the new test includes 60 years after Christ?

What express command or precedent is there for dipping the whole body under water, or for delaying the Baptism of children born of christian parents, or for Baptising them at adult years?

How came it to pass, that the christian church universally practised infant Baptism from the days of the Apostles, and no body of christians till the eleventh, and no writer of note till the sixteenth century opposed it, if 'twas not the will of Christ, and the practise of his Apostles?

Sir, these questions are a summary of the several letters you have received from me, on Dr. Gill's late Sermon on the subjects and mode of Baptism: If they do not make you likeminded with myself; I am persuaded, you will now think, 'tis not without some *strong reasons* I dissent from you: Though the *whole christian world* (very few individuals excepted) *is with me*; I lay no stress upon that; yet when we seriously reflect, is it not strange, that for *so many centuries*, Christ should suffer his ministers and people universally to err, in *two so material articles*, as the *proper subjects of his visible Church*, and the *initiating ordinance into it*? But not to enlarge; what hath passed between us, instead of dissolving our  
friend-

friendship, will I trust, rather knit us the closer, and make us more readily, *put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness*. Probably your observation will be true “*that my Letters if published, will make the Doctor snarl, and preach and print against me.*” But, Sir, inform him, that unless he writes to the purpose, unless he *leaves off to quibble, and evade, and beg the question*, unless like a D. D. (without the shameful loss of charity and good manners) he gives *fair, ingenuous, and solid answers*, to the several questions proposed, and arguments advanced; he may write and write again, without any notice taken of him: Beg him also, not to produce any more *quotations and charitable concessions* from the learned, as on his side; when he knows their *sentiments, writings, and practice*, were directly against him; this is *worse than stiling them Dunces*; ’tis making them *feloniously to stab themselves*. You may also assure him, should he pour on me all the opprobrious names, which distinguish his former writings from other mens; I shall not be in the least disappointed, or disquieted; but be still ready as a brother, to *reprove, exhort, forgive and throw the mantle of charity over him*. In the exercise of that divine grace, *charity*, and in obedience to all the moral precepts of God and of Christ, let us, Sir, *go on unto perfection*; receiving and loving one another, as *Christ hath received and loved us*. This is the desire and resolution of,

Dear, Sir,

Your’s, &c.

F I N I S.

